

Vatican denies it was refused role in Madrid

VATICAN CITY (AP) — The Vatican Saturday denied a report that the U.S. State Department had vetoed its participation in a Middle East peace conference this week. Vatican spokesman Joaquín Navarro told reporters that the Vatican had not asked to take part in the conference in MADRID. "The discussions at the conference include many technical problems, and I don't see how the Holy See could be competent in many of these; that is not its role," Mr. Navarro said. The Italian news agency AGF reported Friday that the Vatican had asked the State Department to send observers to the talks. Washington turned down the request, saying the Vatican's presence could complicate the negotiations, according to AGF, which quoted unidentified Vatican sources. Mr. Navarro acknowledged that the Vatican's Foreign Minister, Monsignor Jean-Louis Tauran said last spring he hoped a Vatican delegation could attend the peace conference. But he said "the situation has changed" and added: "The presence of the Holy See in this phase, is assured by the weight, consistency and frequency of interventions by the Pope" and other Vatican officials on the Middle East.

Jordan Times

Independent Arab political daily founded by the Jordanian Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية

Palestinian delegates in Egypt

CAIRO (R) — Leading Palestinian delegates to Wednesday's Middle East peace conference flew into Cairo on Saturday for talks with Egyptian officials, airport sources said. Haider Abdul Shafi, the chief Palestinian negotiator, was met at Cairo airport by senior officials. He was accompanied by Faisal Al Hussein and Hanan Ashrawi. They were expected to hold talks with Foreign Minister Amr Musa and President Hosni Mubarak's top political adviser, Osama Al Buz. Reporters were barred from talking to them. Mr. Hussein and Dr. Ashrawi, who negotiated the terms of Palestinian participation with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, are not part of the joint Palestinian-Jordanian team that will face Israeli negotiators in the peace talks. But they will go to Madrid to advise Palestinian delegates. Egypt will attend the peace conference as an observer.

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Iran protests seizure of arms-laden ship

NICOSIA (AP) — The Iranian Foreign Ministry Saturday summoned the Turkish ambassador in Tehran to protest the detention of a ship carrying arms from Bulgaria to Iran. Tehran Radio quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Morteza Sarmadi as saying a letter handed to Ambassador Omer Akbel called for the "immediate and unconditional release of the ship and its cargo." The radio said a statement by a Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman claimed the arms were most likely being carried for terrorist groups was "irresponsible, and in contravention to the principles of friendship agreed by the two countries." The radio quoted the letter as saying, "such encounters can only benefit opponents of good relations between the two countries." A Cypriot-registered ship carrying a large cargo of anti-aircraft missiles and other advanced weapons was seized en route by Turkish authorities Tuesday.

Saudi paper says 60 nationals detained in Iraq

JEDDAH (AP) — There are 60 Saudi Arabians still detained in Iraq almost eight months after the end of the Gulf war, the daily Al Madinah reported Saturday. Al Madinah, which published the 60 names, said the Iraqi government was also holding 1,587 Kuwaitis and two Bahrainis in addition to 450 persons of various other nationalities. It attributed its report to the secretary of the "National Kuwait Committee for the Affairs of POWs," Walid Al Saqr. The paper flatly described these as "prisoners of war." But it appeared to be referring to Saudi civilians either detained in Iraq or possibly seized while in Kuwait by Iraqi forces before the end of the Gulf war. Saudi Defence Minister Prince Sultan said last month that the Iraqis held six prisoners of war, including a jet fighter pilot who bailed out in Iraq during the Gulf war. Mr. Saqr told the paper that more than 6,000 detainees have been released since the war ended, transiting through the Saudi-Iraq border town of Arar.

China calls for coalition government in Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD (R) — Chinese President Yang Shangkun said Saturday Afghanistan could find peace only through a political accord and called for a coalition government in Kabul. China supports a five-point United Nations plan under which the warring sides would agree a transitional government, and 13 years of hostilities and hold elections, he told a state banquet in Pakistan. "It is the consistent position of the Chinese government that the various political forces should, through friendly consultations, form a broadly-based coalition government," Mr. Yang said on the first day of a five-day state visit to Pakistan. China has long backed Pakistan in supporting Afghan guerrilla forces in their fight to topple the government.

Vietnam says U.S. will ease embargo

BANGKOK (AP) — The United States plans to ease its longstanding embargo against Vietnam, and representatives of the former enemies will meet next month in New York to discuss normalisation of relations, the official Voice of Vietnam reported. The moves would be significant steps towards restoring relations between the two nations, whose armies fought each other for more than a decade. The state radio said the moves were agreed to Wednesday in Paris when U.S. Secretary of State James Baker met Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Man Cam. They talked prior to the signing of a peace accord ending nearly 13 years of war in Cambodia. Washington has long made peace in Cambodia a condition for restoring ties with Vietnam, which invaded its neighbour in late 1978 and installed the current government in Phnom Penh. Mr. Baker told reporters in Paris that talks on restoring ties with Vietnam could begin as early as next month.



His Majesty King Hussein Saturday meets with joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace conference in Madrid (Photo by Youssef Al 'Alana)

King: Jordan committed to just peace, solutions to all problems

Jordan will attend regional talks; peace at any price is not the goal

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein said Saturday Jordan is firmly committed to taking part in Mideast peace talks that start this week in Madrid but said Israeli settlements in the occupied territories remain a major problem. In a Cable News Network (CNN) television interview, King Hussein underlined the importance of regional talks with Israel on issues such as sharing water, arms control, refugees and the environment. "We have committed ourselves to going to that regional conference and we believe that it must be held," King Hussein said, adding "I hope that all will attend."

"Without a comprehensive solution which involves also all in

the region, the future is very bleak and very, very difficult to deal with," King Hussein said. He predicted the talks would be "a long and arduous process." King Hussein said Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories have put at the top of their agenda, could be a problem that would make it impossible for Arabs to continue the talks. "I believe the settlements have been a problem and are a problem and continue to be a problem," King Hussein said. "Even if they were frozen in the sense that no more were built, they'll have to be addressed in the process obviously."

The King said he hoped Israel would "stop these activities" because it would be "impossible" for Israel to continue in a process when the Israelis are

creating obstacles to peace over territory that is after all the subject of the negotiations together with rights of people of these territories."

If Israel resists the Arab position, King Hussein said, it would mean the talks were "to say the least, not very serious" because it might imply Jordanians and Palestinians "acquiesce" to the current situation.

King Hussein said the outcome of the talks was uncertain but said Jordan was going "in good faith and with a real determination to do whatever is possible to contribute towards the establishment of a just and durable peace in this region."

But King Hussein added that, once started, the participants "can not afford to fail" for fear of letting loose "forces of darkness and extremism" that could threaten peace in the Middle East and the world.

"We are united in trying to achieve just peace through this conference

and peace process, and contributing to the removal of many barriers of doubt and suspicion and fear and to secure a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli problem, the Arab-Israeli problem and the regional problems, in terms of the fact that this chronic tragic situation between Arabs and Israelis has been the root cause of instability in the region, and to achieve the kind of peace that future generations can enjoy and protect and live with."

"I am sure that is going to be a long arduous process. It will not be easy, but nonetheless I hope that with the help of the rest of the world — after all this is a direction everyone is taking — and it is the only way to resolve problems wherever they exist."

"I would hope that by that time at least much of the rhetoric that probably will mark the beginning of the process would have given way to

thought and concern for people in this region. I hope that on the Palestinian-Israeli dimension, a lot of progress would have been achieved as well along the lines already evident. After all, the process is based on Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, which call for the meeting of all parties under the right conditions to resolve this problem."

Replying to another question, King Hussein said: "Peace after all is the objective, but not peace at any price; moral peace that is the result of the present balance of power or the lack of it. It is a kind of peace people can live with — and can protect, and I believe this will be achieved."

"If we look at the problems which have existed in other parts of the world before any real genuine attempt was made to resolve them. Even in this area for example, Egypt

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Bush to meet Shamir, heads of delegations to peace conference

MADRID (Agencies) — In an effort to determine changes in Israel's position in Middle East peace negotiations, President George Bush will meet with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir ahead of the conference, officials said Saturday. Mr. Bush had first announced the planned meeting Friday, and the officials in Madrid said the U.S.-Israeli discussion will take place either late Tuesday or early Wednesday, the day the Madrid conference opens under the auspices of the United States and Soviet Union, the officials spoke on condition of anonymity.

Relations between Mr. Bush and Mr. Shamir have been cool, and both sides want to ease tensions before the start of the delicate Arab-Israeli talks. The two last met in Washington in December 1990.

Mr. Bush is seeking to find out Mr. Shamir's positions on the delicate issues to be negotiated in the first comprehensive talks between Israel and the Arabs. Mr. Shamir's decision earlier this week to suppress his relatively dovish foreign minister, David Levy, started a political row in Israel and galvanised Arab leaders to toughen their positions in anticipation of a more hardline Israeli stand.

Mr. Shamir is the only prime minister to head a delegation to the talks. All the Arab delegations will be led by foreign ministers.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, whose country is taking part only as an observer in the talks, had planned to come here too. But Egyptian sources say he probably will stay home — partly out of a desire to avoid a meeting with Mr. Shamir.

Egypt is the only Arab country which has a peace treaty with Israel, but the relationship has generally been a cool one. Egypt hosted a meeting last week for Syrian and other Arab officials to coordinate their positions in advance of the talks with Israel.

Mr. Bush will also be meeting here Tuesday with Mr. Gorbachev, as well as with Spanish

Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez and King Juan Carlos.

The president said Friday the United States would be an active partner in the search for peace. His meetings with Mr. Shamir and the Arab foreign ministers would give him a chance to establish the U.S. goals at the very outset.

Mr. Bush was unwilling to discuss them in detail at a White House news conference. He cautioned that only the Israelis and Arabs could reconcile their "enormous differences."

Mr. Bush disclosed to reporters his meeting with Mr. Shamir, and then Secretary of State James Baker said in an interview with the U.S.-based Cable News Network (CNN) that Mr. Bush "will find ways" to meet with the heads of the Arab delegations as well.

Mr. Baker, meanwhile, said the United States will support progress on any front, not holding any agreement Israel may reach with one of its Arab neighbours "hostage" to agreement with the others.

The Arabs have insisted on a comprehensive settlement — one that would require Israel to reach accords with all the Arab states and the Palestinians.

Baker: No formal linkage

The terms on which Mr. Baker set up the peace conference refer to a comprehensive settlement, and he said that remained a U.S. goal.

However, Mr. Baker said the United States did not support "formal linkage."

"If we can make progress toward peace on any front we'd like to see it, without holding that possible progress hostage for a complete and comprehensive solution," he said. "That does not accord with the Arab position."

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, in a separate CNN interview, said he did not think a comprehensive peace could be achieved in this round.

But, Dr. Kissinger said, "if the administration achieves a series

of one or two limited agreements it will have served the country and the peace of the world very well."

With the Israelis and Arabs staking out divergent positions, Mr. Bush said he did not know where the talks would lead. "It will take patience and determination," he said.

"The United States cannot make peace in the Middle East," Mr. Bush said. "Only the parties themselves can do that."

Negotiator fears pressure

Uzi Landau, one of the Israeli delegates who will face Arab negotiators next week, goes to Madrid reluctantly and with "heavy fears."

Peace in the Middle East is still years away, he says. But maybe, when it does come, people will look back on the Wednesday's meeting in Spain as the vital step on the road.

"I am not enthusiastic about the Madrid conference," Mr. Landau told Israeli army radio. "It could be the introduction to a process in which all the participants except us seek to return to the 1967 borders — without Jerusalem, without the Golan Heights."

"At the beginning of any process like this, you have heavy fears in your heart going in."

"But despite this, it is an additional step that after a number of years, I hope, peace will be agreed upon, you can maybe say 'it started in Madrid.'"

Mr. Landau, a member of parliament in the ruling Likud party, is one of the footsoldiers of the 14-member Israeli delegation which will be led by Mr. Shamir and prominent aides like Yossi Ben Aharon and Elyakim Rubinstein.

In a line up of hardliners, he is one of the most adamant, believing that Israel should have demanded stronger assurances of support from the United States before agreeing to attend.

He is a strong advocate of Jewish settlement in the occupied Arab territories. Israeli newspapers suggest he was chosen for that reason.

Subsidy cutback will not hurt poor — minister

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government is considering various options to reduce subsidies on basic food items, but any reduction will be applied through a mechanism which will ensure that the low-income segment of the population is not affected, according to Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb.

"We are very aware that a blanket removal or reduction of subsidies will make it very difficult for some of our people and we will ensure that these people are protected against any such move," the minister said in a recent interview.

The philosophy that guides the government's thinking, he explained, is that food subsidies should reach only those who really deserve it.

Total government expenditure on subsidies in 1991 is estimated at JD 60 million to JD 90 million in 1989. A split-up of the 1991 figure showed that JD 31 million were spent on subsidising bread, JD 14 million on sugar, rice and milk, and JD 16 million to JD 18 million on animal feed.

The figures reflect a saving of JD 25 million resulting from a coupon system for sugar, rice and milk introduced in mid-1990. Subsidised bread remained outside the system, particularly in view of apprehensions voiced by government officials that removal of bread subsidies might lead to popular protests.

The subsidy coupons are available only to families who possess civil registration books. Commercial establishments and food industries as well as foreign residents have to buy the commodities at higher market prices, also set by the government.

Mr. Abul Ragheb brushed aside suggestions that the government consideration of removing or reducing subsidies was prompted by a demand made by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as part of the Kingdom's economic restructuring programme.

"It doesn't matter whether the IMF wants it or not. What matters is that there is a lopsided situation which should be corrected and this means that the food subsidies should not be used for commercial purposes or go to those who can do without them," the minister told the Jordan Times.

"How can we accept that someone with an annual income of JD 5,000 gets the same treatment as someone with JD 1,500?" he asked. "How can we accept restaurants and food industries making huge profits at the expense of the government?"

If anything, he added, the low-income groups should get additional subsidy benefits and, towards this end, the government is prepared to increase their share of subsidies while reducing the benefits for the rich.

"If we manage to save, say JD 25 million, we don't mind spending half of it to increase the benefits for those who deserve it," he said.

Economists concede that the coupon system is not fool-proof to ensure that only the needy gets the benefit since all those who possess family registration books are entitled to the subsidy regardless of their income.

At the same time, experts also point out that many of the rich and middle-class families do not avail themselves of the coupons either because they could not bother themselves or because they feel that subsidies should be left to the needier.

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King meets with joint delegation to Madrid

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein received at the Royal Court Saturday the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the peace conference to open in Madrid Wednesday.

During the meeting emphasis was given to the need for full coordination at the highest level at the peace conference.

Attending the meeting were Prime Minister Taher Masri, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and His Royal Highness Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, the King's military secretary.

Following the meeting, King Hussein sent a letter to Dr. Abdul Salam Al Majali, who he designated as head of the Jordanian side to the joint delegation.

Following is the King's letter to Dr. Majali:

"I have had the pleasure in my acquaintance with you over the past four decades. You have been a dear brother and a faithful soldier serving his nation and country. You have shouldered the burden of heavy responsibilities and proved to be exemplary in being a responsible and faithful advisor and a distinguished thinker for your country. You have exerted all efforts, utilising your faculty in a distinguished manner among your colleagues and Jordanian citizens, who contributed to the country's construction under the most difficult and critical stages of our modern history.

"You have been and will continue to be the subject of our absolute confidence and appreciation for your service to Jordan and for your continued endeavours to corroborate the national and pan-Arab march in the political, educational and social fields. You have set the most noble example to others in faithfully shouldering the responsibility for Jordan for its leadership and people and for the future of its sons to which we have dedicated ourselves so that Jordanian heads may remain raised with pride in the face of all challenges.

"As the present stage requires the mobilisation of all the national forces towards the confrontation of the challenge of a just peace while we head towards the peace conference to provide protection and defence for the nation, in commitment to the Arab Nation and kinsmen in dear Palestine, in pursuit of the establishment of justice and just and durable and comprehensive peace for the whole region, in defence of the rights of the coming generations, and in fulfillment of our duty towards the future generations so that they may live a decent, secure and stable life so as to continue the process of reconstruction, we have chosen you to be at the helm of the Jordanian side to the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the peace conference due to

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The Cabinet Saturday named the Jordanian delegation to the peace conference.

Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber will head the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

Dr. Abdul Salam Al Majali, a health minister in several previous governments and a former senior adviser to King Hussein, will head the Jordanian team in bilateral talks with Israel.

Negotiators are:

— Aviad Khalidi, a native of the southern city of Khaliyah who is an expert on war tactics and Jordan's ambassador to France.

— Talal Sataun Hassan, born in the northern city of Irbid, ambassador to Belgium and the European Community.

— Fuad Ayyoub, Irbid Native, former press spokesman for the Royal Palace and now ambassador-designate to the United Kingdom.

— Adnan Bakht, from Maabes west of Amman, a historian and vice president of Jordan University.

— Mohammad Bani Hani, an Irbid native, expert on water resources and secretary general of the Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs and the Environment.

— Mohammad Adwan, born in the Jordan Valley, a farmer, water and irrigation expert and ambassador to the Soviet Union.

— Abdul Hafez Mireh, born in Madaba, an army general and assistant military chief of staff.

— Aoun Khasawneh, Irbid native, Foreign Ministry official and legal adviser to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

— Ghassan Al Jumli, from Amman, an international law lecturer at Jordan University.

— Mousa Bredat, political researcher.

— Walid Al Khalidi, Harvard University professor.

The cabinet also named Mr. Anwar Al Khalidi as an advisor for the delegation. The Jordanian delegation will also be accompanied by a number of experts and consultants.

Turkish forces continue attacks in northern Iraq

ANKARA (Agencies) — Turkey launched a second day of attacks Saturday into northern Iraq, saying it was determined to wipe out Turkish Kurdish guerrillas who killed at least 17 soldiers in a border raid.

The operation was Turkey's second in a month and this year into Iraq. It was apparently triggered by attacks by guerrillas of the outlawed Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) on border outposts with heavy weapons.

But Iraqi Kurds said late Friday that the Turkish air force had used napalm bombs and struck civilian areas, not PKK bases. Earlier this month, the Turkish air force dropped napalm on civilian settlements in northern Iraq during an operation against the PKK, according to witnesses and local officials.

At least three civilians were killed and dozens of people, including children, were wounded, according to local doctors.

Western relief workers have expressed concern that the Turkish raids might disrupt the resettlement of refugees. At least 1.5 million Iraqi Kurds fled to the Iranian and Turkish borders after their rebellion against the Iraqi government was crushed following the Gulf war.

A U.S.-led allied force helped resettle hundreds of thousands of them, and many are now rebuilding their homes.

The Anatolian news agency said crack troops, backed by jet

fighters, attacked PKK bases inside Iraq opposite the Turkish town of Cukurca.

It did not say how many troops were involved.

Caretaker Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz said Friday night the raids would continue.

"Everyone should know that the Turkish state is one, permanent and powerful," he told state-run television.

Government spokeswoman Imren Aykut said 4,000 troops backed by F-104 Starfighters and helicopters inflicted heavy losses on PKK rebels Friday and sent them fleeing deeper into Iraq.

Mr. Aykut said about 400 to 500 PKK guerrillas attacked gendarme posts in the southeastern Cukurca region Thursday night, killing 17 soldiers. Anatolian said four PKK rebels died.

Earlier Thursday, PKK rebels had killed seven troops in an ambush in Sirmak province and killed a civilian in an attack on a passenger train in Mus province.

At least 90 Turkish soldiers have been killed so far this year in PKK-linked incidents in the southeast, daily Cumhuriyet said.

Friday's strike into Iraq was the third cross-border attack by Turkey in the three months. The two earlier Turkish incursions into Iraq were sparked by PKK raids that killed nine soldiers in a gendarme post on Aug. 4 and 11 soldiers on border patrol on Oct. 11.

Iraqi Kurds say they trying to conclude autonomy deal

ANKARA (Agencies) — Iraqi Kurdish guerrilla groups will meet next week to try to decide whether to sign a draft autonomy accord with the Iraqi government, a Kurdish official said on Friday.

Hoshiyar Zebari, a senior member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), said the Kurdistan Front, grouping eight Kurdish parties, would gather in rebel-held territory to hear the report of a delegation sent to test Western support for the Kurds.

"If we reach a consensus in the front, which I personally think is unlikely, an agreement could be announced within days," he told Reuters in Ankara, on his way to northern Iraq.

Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), was due in the Turkish capital Saturday and a PUK spokesman said he would head for northern Iraq Tuesday.

Iraqi Kurds are split over the draft autonomy accord brought back from Baghdad in August by KDP leader Massoud Barzani after four months of negotiations.

Differences between the KDP and the PUK surfaced earlier attempts to reach a decision on whether to sign.

Anxious to maintain unity, the Kurdistan Front sent a delegation led by Mr. Talabani to Washington and European capitals to assess how much international support the Kurds command.

"The meetings were helpful," said Mr. Zebari, a member of the delegation. "The U.S. administration gave us a recognition we had not had before and said they wanted to keep up the dialogue."

U.S. officials has told the Kurds they wanted a democratic, pluralistic Iraq, but had no advice on the autonomy deal.

"They won't endorse it or

oppose it," Mr. Zebari said. "They said it's our decision and we must resolve our own problems. So in a way we got no answers to concrete questions."

Mr. Barzani has been more sceptical than Mr. Talabani about how much the Kurds should count on the West, despite the big allied military relief effort mounted for Kurdish refugees after the failure of post-Gulf war rebellions against government.

The United States, Britain and France have combat planes in southern Turkey to protect Kurds in the former refugee security zone in northern Iraq.

Mr. Zebari said the allied failure to prevent Turkish air raids aimed at rebel Turkish Kurds operating from northern Iraq had shaken Kurdish confidence because the raids had hit civilians in the security zone. Turkey denies causing civilian casualties.

Ankara launched its third cross-border operation in three months Friday after a day of attacks by separatist Turkish Kurds in which 24 soldiers, one civilian and four rebels were killed.

Mr. Zebari said the KDP would not sign the autonomy agreement unless the Iraqi government named Sinjar, Khanaqin and the oil-rich city of Kirkuk as disputed areas whose status would be settled later.

"Barzani won't sign without resolving that," he said, adding that Baghdad had agreed that normalisation terms for the rest of Kurdistan would apply to the disputed areas and that Kirkuk would be jointly administered by Arabs, Kurds and Turkomans.

Prisoner swap sought

Kurdish guerrillas have said they are trying to swap captured

Iraqi soldiers for the thousands of Kurds they say are held by the government.

"Our leaders say we will hold onto these men until we get something in return," said Khabat Saad Khader of the Kurdistan Socialist Party (KSP).

The KSP is one of two Kurdish political parties, backed by guerrilla forces, holding more than 600 Iraqi soldiers and officers prisoner in northern Iraq, Mr. Khader said.

They were among about 4,000 Iraqi soldiers who were captured or surrendered during four days of fighting around the city of Sulaimaniyah earlier this month in which more than 400 people were killed or wounded.

At least 60 captured Iraqi government soldiers were shot or bludgeoned to death, but the majority were released unharmed.

Mr. Khader said the KSP is holding 314 Iraqi soldiers, including 33 officers, in Naopares. About 300 Iraqi officers are being held in Kalachwan by PUK.

"These men are not prisoners, they are guests," said Mr. Khader.

According to Western relief officials, the proposed exchange of Iraqi for Kurdish civilians and information about missing Kurds has drawn a cool response from the Iraqi government.

Kurdish political leaders charge that thousands of civilian Kurds are being held as political prisoners by the Iraqi government.

The Geneva-based International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC), which has an outpost in Penjwin about 30 kilometres north of Naopares, refuses to comment on its involvement, if any, with the proposed prisoner exchange.



KING MEETS DELEGATION: His Majesty King Hussein Saturday with the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace conference in Madrid which opens Oct. 30. (see story on page 1). Photo above shows the King with Palestinian leaders Faisal Husseini, Haidar Abdel Shafi, Elias Frej, Hassan Ashrawi and Zaki al-Nashari (photo by Yousef Al 'Alam).

Iraq seeks foreign experts to boost its oil output

NEW YORK (R) — War-ravaged Iraq is inviting foreign oil experts to help boost its oil output but U.S. oil industry sources say the volatile political climate in that country is still too risky.

For now the point is moot because of U.N. sanctions against Iraq. But experts say that even when those sanctions are lifted Western companies will tread warily.

"U.S. oil firms wouldn't want to risk endangering their personnel. An American in Baghdad has a target on his back," said Charles McPadden of consultants Bonner Moore.

Iraq's Oil Minister Osama Al Hiti said Wednesday that Iraq would invite foreign oil companies to help it raise its oil production to more than six million barrels a day by 1994. Right now Iraq is producing 450,000 barrels, down sharply from 3.1 million barrels produced ahead of the Gulf crisis in August 1990.

An oil industry source at the Buenos Aires this week said Iraq's bid for foreign participation in its industry was the most important development since the state nationalised foreign oil companies in 1972.

But the time is not right for forays into Iraq, oil experts said.

Aside from the physical dangers of placing staff in what is still considered "hostile" territory in the wake of the Gulf war many companies are leery about investing in a country where the political future is so uncertain.

"In order for firms to invest there they'll want to make sure there's domestic and international political stability," said Cyrus Tahmasebi, economist at Ashland Oil Inc., based in Ashland, Kentucky.

American oil companies also fear public backlash.

"Most Western firms believe a stigma is attached with Iraq as long as it is associated with political disavowal," said Cyril Malik of Energy Security Analysis Inc. "Sanctions determine the political correctness of dealing with Iraq."

But some industry sources said many companies have been waiting for an opportunity to tap into that oil-rich country.

"A lot of people have been interested in Iraq due to its potential. People have been drooling for this opportunity," said one oil industry executive who requested anonymity.

U.N. says it found 'complete' Iraqi nuclear weapon blueprint

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — U.N. weapons inspectors have obtained Baghdad's complete blueprint for a working nuclear weapon, U.N. weapons experts confirmed Friday.

Before the Gulf war disrupted Iraq's nuclear programme, Baghdad could have produced a "working" nuclear bomb in about a year or 15 months, U.N. nuclear expert Michel St. Mieux said.

Only inadequate supplies of fissionable uranium and plutonium prevented Baghdad from building the bomb, the French nuclear expert said.

Although the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and U.N. inspection teams had seized numerous documents on various aspects of Iraq's nuclear programme, Friday's disclosure was the first confirmation that the design for a complete working weapon had been found.

The Iraqi plan was for an "implosion-type" atomic weapon. Such a nuclear device requires less enriched uranium than a crude Hiroshima-style A-bomb, which explodes, and is

much larger and heavier.

"You could put it on a missile," said Johan Molander, the spokesman for the U.N. special commission, that is dismantling Iraq's weapons of mass destruction as well as longer-range missiles.

The first-generation Hiroshima-style bombs were so cumbersome that they could only be delivered by an airplane, he said.

Previously translated documents from Baghdad concluded only that Iraq was engaged in a broad-based effort to design and develop an implosion-type nuclear weapon, but did not hint that the plans had been completed and perfected.

The disclosure follows the completion this week of the seventh IAEA nuclear inspection visit to Iraq, led by Dimitri Pericicos, an IAEA inspector from Greece.

After months of denials, the Iraqi government admitted last week that it had a nuclear weapons "research" programme, but said no political decision to actually build a bomb had been made.

Under the April 3 Gulf war

ceasefire resolution, the Security Council obliged Iraq to cooperate with the United Nations in the destruction of its nuclear, chemical and biological weapons potential as well as longer-range missiles.

Mr. St. Mieux disclosed Thursday that Iraq had gone beyond the design phase of its nuclear weapons programme and was conducting test blasts of nuclear weapons components at a secret desert site before the Gulf war.

The components tested were high-explosive lenses, which enable engineers to boost the power of an atomic blast, Mr. St. Mieux said.

The experiments as well as the discovery that Iraq was producing lithium-6 indicated that Iraq was working toward developing a hydrogen bomb, Mr. St. Mieux said.

The Security Council on Oct. 11 banned Iraq's atomic programme so it cannot be used as a cover for weapons research, and decided to monitor indefinitely its chemical and biological weapons programmes and ballistic missiles.

Hersh retaliates with libel suits against Maxwell, Davies

LONDON (AP) — Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Seymour Hersh, accused of libeling media mogul Robert Maxwell in his book on Israel's nuclear programme, filed three libel actions of his own on Friday.

The author of "The Samson Option" issued writs for libel and slander against Mr. Maxwell, Daily Mirror foreign editor Nick Davies, and the Mirror group newspapers.

All three had filed suit against Mr. Hersh's Thorsons. Mr. Hersh's book, which centres on Israel's nuclear programme, alleges Mr. Maxwell had close links to the Israeli secret service, the Mossad, and that Mr. Davies was involved in arms dealing.

Both Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Davies have denied the allegations, which prompted two members of parliament to call for an investigation earlier this week.

At least 15 libel actions involving the book have been filed since "The Samson Option" was published Sunday.

Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Davies and Mirror group newspapers previously filed suits against Faber and Faber, the book's publisher, and conservative legislator Rupert Allason, one of two lawmakers who raised Mr. Hersh's allegation in motions in the House of Commons.

Both Mr. Allason and the publishers have filed counter-suits.

France, Iran resolve \$1 billion loan dispute

PARIS (AP) — France and Iran are about to conclude an accord settling a dispute over a \$1 billion loan that has poisoned relations since the Islamic republic was formed 12 years ago, according to French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas.

"The negotiators have finished their work," Mr. Dumas told France-Inter Radio Friday. "We are going through the texts with a fine-tooth comb. They should be initiated today."

He said he expected to sign the accord "in the coming days or weeks."

Foreign Ministry spokesman Daniel Bernard said that both sides agreed to keep the terms of the agreement confidential.

Iran has made clear that settling the dispute was indispensable to normalising relations. France sees it as a means to participate in the Iranian effort to rebuild the country after eight years of war with Iraq.

However, the Aug. 6 assassination of former Iranian Prime Minister Shah Bakhtiar has again clouded the horizon as French investigators inch towards the Tehran regime.

French judicial authorities issued an international arrest warrant Wednesday for an Iranian government official, Hossein Sheikhkhatir, counsel to Iran's telecommunications minister, for complicity in the killing and relations with a terrorist enterprise. Three other Iranians have been charged, and officials are trying to determine whether the assassination was carried out on behalf of the Tehran regime.

President Francois Mitterrand still plans in principle to make a trip to Tehran, Mr. Dumas said, adding that no date had been set.

It has been planned for this fall and thought the accord would be signed then.

Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), reporting from Paris, said that Mr. Dumas would sign the accord in Tehran but no date has been set.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmoud Vaezi, chief Iranian negotiator, arrived in Paris Wednesday for what Mr. Dumas suggested was the final round of talks.

The dispute grew out of a \$1 billion 1974 loan made by Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi to the French Atomic Energy Commission to build a uranium enrichment plant.

France has repaid two installments of the loan amounting to a total of \$630 million. But Iran is demanding accumulated interest, and France, in turn, seeks compensation for contracts broken after the Iranian revolution with a consortium of French companies which were to build nuclear reactors.

Mr. Dumas earlier this week confirmed reports of a last-minute Iranian demand to procure enriched uranium as part of the settlement. He said then it was one of two remaining obstacles, the other being a fiscal matter.

Mr. Bernard said the uranium issue was resolved "to the satisfaction of both parties," but did not elaborate.

The demand for enriched uranium backed plans to conclude the accord in July during a visit here by Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati. Under a 1975 accord, Iran was to procure a portion of the enriched uranium from the plant.

EC's participation in Mideast talks step towards political union

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Community's (EC) participation next week in Middle East peace talks will mark an important step in its efforts to be recognised as an influential player on the world stage.

But it will fall short of earlier ambitions by the dozen Western European nations to share equal billing with the United States and Soviet Union as co-sponsors of the conference opening Wednesday in Madrid.

The EC is expected to have little influence on any political solution the conference reaches, a reflection of the community's relatively small role in Mideast diplomacy.

The EC's political role in the Middle East has been minimal beside that of the United States and this was magnified during the Gulf war.

But the bloc is Israel's number one trading partner and has channelled millions of dollars to Arab states. It could provide expertise and inducements for progress if the conference eventually moves forward into tackling regional economic issues.

Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek, whose country holds the community's rotating presidency, will represent the

community as a "participant" in the parity.

That term according to some, denotes a higher status than observer but is not quite at the level of co-sponsor. "It puts us on a little different footing than the others," said Mr. Van den Broek's spokesman, Dig Ithra.

Whatever the title, the community is happy to be included.

"There is no criticism in any European country about the status of the European Community," Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jacques Poos said. "Everybody is satisfied."

Officials see EC presence at the talks as a sign the trading bloc is gaining importance in world politics.

The group is negotiating changes in its constitution so the dozen nations can form a loosely knit political union, with a common foreign, security and maybe defence policy.

The goal is to build up the community's political muscle to match its economic strength.

Mr. Poos, who helped arrange the EC's participation in the peace talks, said in a telephone interview that its inclusion is "a recognition of the political role of the community" even before the political union exists.

Even so, the community's in-

fluence on the conference will likely be greatest during eventual discussions on regional economic development.

"But this doesn't mean the community intends to be absent from the political settlement. We intend to follow that extremely closely as well," said Pierre-Edouard Champenois, head of the EC's ad hoc foreign policy arm.

West European nations, particularly Britain and France, have long had ties to the Middle East, including former colonial holdings there. Israel recently agreed to let an EC official supervise aid programmes in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

But the community's political influence in the region has waned. The United States gained new leverage after defeating Iraq in the Gulf War and freeing Kuwait.

And Israel has been uneasy about the involvement of pro-Arab nations in Western Europe, fearing they might try to force concessions it considers unfair.

The community has supported calls for Israel to give up land seized in the 1967 war.

The EC nations are: Belgium, Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain.

Spain mounts massive security operation

MADRID (Agencies) — An estimated 12,000 police civil guards will be on duty in Madrid as part of "Operation Pax," the government's security plan for next week's Mideast peace conference, newspapers say.

Government spokeswoman Rosa Conde told Spanish reporters 4,000 extra law enforcement agents would be brought to the capital to patrol the city during the talks, scheduled to begin Oct. 30.

She said the government was working closely with U.S. and Soviet security agents. The two countries, which are co-sponsoring the long-awaited talks, are in charge of security inside the royal palace, where the conference is being held.

"It's going to be a success. Everything is set," Ms. Conde said, when asked about Operation Pax.

But she admitted the government was worried about the capacity of the airport, where the sheer numbers of incoming participants, journalists and observers could cause massive congestion.

An estimated 4,500 journalists are expected to cover the event. Ms. Conde did not say how many people would make up the delegations.

Israel, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians are participating in the conference, the first since a failed 1973 parley in Geneva, Switzerland. U.S. President George Bush and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev are to hold a mini-summit a day before delivering opening remarks at the talks.

Paramilitary civil guards will mount vigils at the airport, armed the royal palace and at the press centre.

The national police force is to guard hotels where the delegations are staying and embassies of participating countries.

Interior Minister Jose Luis Corcuera and other ministers hold strategy meetings every evening and tanks are already in position at Madrid's Barajas airport east of Madrid.

Inside the air terminal, which will continue to operate normally, officers in bullet-proof vests are already on patrol.

Reporters are expected to begin arriving in Madrid this weekend to take up residence in hotels that have been fully booked almost from the moment the news of the conference venue broke.

By the time talks are in full swing, Madrid could have an extra 10,000 residents.

The Pabel De los Cristales, a huge glass exhibition hall in the Casa de Campo park, is being turned into a media centre with the help of 60 local firms.

In an area of 23,000 square metres, thousand telephones will ring at a thousand desks where five hundred typewriters — including 40 with Hebrew script and 50 with Arabic — will chatter.

Most national delegations will also have offices there. But the White House has picked a hotel on the opposite side of the city to set up its base.

The difficulties of getting across town are being brushed aside by the authorities, who are laying on fleets of minibuses to ferry participants between the Pabelon and the elegant Versailles-like Royal Palace.

But official convoys risk getting snarled up on one of Madrid's nightmarish traffic jams. Peace conference or not, many people are still planning to jump their cars and head off for the annual All Saints Day holiday on Nov. 1.

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel. 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 Les Badabols
17:50 A la decouverte de zeme couzant
18:15 L'ecole des faus
18:30 News in French
19:15 Carret de notes
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Golden Girls
21:10 Murder She Wrote
21:30 News in English
22:30 The Orchid House

PRAYER TIMES
04:26 Fajr
05:43 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:19 Dhuhr
14:27 'Asr
16:46 Maghreb
18:13 Isha

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Switich Tel. 810740
Annunciation of God Church, Tel. 637275
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 674440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 623566
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625441
Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751
Assyrian International Church Tel. 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 623824, 649922
Church of the Nazarene tel. 675691

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be partly cloudy and there will be a chance of scattered showers of rain. Winds will be westerly moderate. In Ashta, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

Amman Mta./Max. temp.
13/12
Ashta 19/31
Deraia 12/26
Jordan Valley 20/30

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Rescue 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 640402
Traffic Police 895390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 603800
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 661912
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (Directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815613
Electric Power

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn. 64281/6
Alkhal Maternity, J. Amn. 64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Mallat, J. Amman 636140
Palestine Specialist 6641714
Shamsi Hospital 699133
University Hospital 845845
Al-Mushtaq Hospital 6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 66612757
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Jedda, Al-Madajra 7771012
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafiah 891611/5
Army, Marka 775111/26
Queen Alia Hospital 60224050
Amal Hospital 674135
ZABQA:
Zarga Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarga National Hospital (09)905560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)987332
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)989890
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)5200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:15	Beirut (RJ)
07:15	Tripoli (RJ)
11:00	Tripoli, Casablanca (RJ)
11:45	Amman (RJ)
12:30	Cairo (RJ)
13:30	Larnaca (RJ)
14:30	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
15:30	Riyadh (RJ)
16:15	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
16:30	Dammam (RJ)
16:45	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
16:50	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
17:00	Beirut (RJ)
17:30	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:45	Casablanca (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

13:45	Bahrain (GF)
17:30	Larnaca (CY)
19:35	Beirut (ME)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:15	Beirut (RJ)
07:15	Tripoli (RJ)
11:00	Tripoli, Casablanca (RJ)
11:45	Amman (RJ)
12:30	Cairo (RJ)
13:30	Larnaca (RJ)
14:30	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
15:30	Riyadh (RJ)
16:15	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
16:30	Dammam (RJ)
16:45	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
16:50	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
17:00	Beirut (RJ)
17:30	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:45	Casablanca (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

13:45	Bahrain (GF)
17:30	Larnaca (CY)
19:35	Beirut (ME)

MARKET PRICES

Uppermarket prices in Jds per kg

Apple	250/600
Banana	300/450
Banana (Makassar)	350/500
Banana	350/500
Chilli	170/100
Cucumber (large)	240/200
Cucumber (small)	130/100
Eggplant	250/180
Garlic	800/700
Green	900/600
Lemon	400/350
Melrow (large)	200/150
Melrow (small)	320/240
Onion	850/750
Onion (dry)	180/120
Pepper (hot)	400/350
Pepper (sweet)	260/200
Potato	400/350
Sage	600/500
Spinach	220/160
Sweet melon	280/200
Tomato	350/300
Watermelon	140/100

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

CBJ official leaves for meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Muhammad Saeed Nabulsi left Amman for Cairo Saturday to take part in the meeting of the Arab Investment Corporation's supervising committee which will start there Sunday. The committee will discuss several issues related to the corporation's activities. The committee groups representatives of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Morocco.

Jordan, India hold talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — A delegation representing the Indian Ministry of Civil Aviation will visit Jordan next month. The delegation is expected to hold talks with Jordanian officials on organising air transport between Jordan and India.

Amman livestock count completed

AMMAN (Petra) — Amman Governor Issa Omari Saturday said the livestock count, which started in the governorate late last week, has ended. He said that a total of 1,910 people from the ministries of agriculture, education, supply, the General Statistics Department and the Public Security Department took part in the count, which he described as one of the most accurate. He added that the total number of livestock heads in the Amman area is 91,532, owned by 1,456 persons.

Road temporarily closed

AMMAN (Petra) — Ibrahim Habashneh Street will be closed for traffic as of today until next Friday, the Traffic Department announced Saturday. Department sources said the closure of the road, which connects Amman and Zarqa, is due to maintenance works being conducted by the Water Authority of Jordan. The sources said the department has prepared, in cooperation with the Traffic Engineering Department of the Amman municipality, substitute roads to be used by passengers travelling between Amman and Zarqa during the closure period.

Jordan polo team wins

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian polo team defeated the British Army team based in Cyprus 4-1 in the match held Saturday at Zarqa Polo Field. The first chukker ended 2-0, with visiting team ahead and then 3-1 before the Jordanian team scored its second goal and the equaliser in the second chukker. The Jordanian team led again in the third chukker at 6-3 while the British team scored its fourth goal in the fourth chukker, at the final whistle. Minister of Youth Salah Ibrahim presented the trophy to Jordan captain Ammar Al-Hmoud.

Meeting reviews 30 working papers

AMMAN (J.T.) — Surgeons representing the private and public sectors in Jordan Friday ended a two-day meeting at the Jerusalem Hotel in Amman after reviewing 30 working papers dealing with a host of internal diseases, treatments and surgery matters. One of the participants in the 19th Annual Conference of Jordanian Surgeons described the discussion as purely professional, with attention directed to topics of concern to Jordanian doctors and specialists. He said delegates exchanged views and information which would be of benefit to Jordanian surgeons. The meetings, organised by the Jordan Surgeons Society, were opened Thursday by Minister of Health Mamdouh Al-Abbadi, who said that the Health Ministry was determined to give moral and material support to the Jordanian Medical Association (JMA), which is considered as a channel of communication between the doctors, the ministry and the local community.

Group deplores embargo on Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — The general secretariat of the pan-Arab Solidarity Conference with the Iraqi people issued a statement Saturday calling on the Arab and Islamic worlds to intensify a campaign to end the blockade on the Iraqi people.

The statement, which followed a general meeting held in Amman in the past week, said that it formed a preparatory committee to embark on collecting donations for Iraq to alleviate the suffering of its people.

The statement called on the Arab and Islamic masses to fight off current attempts to starve Iraq through measures for ending the embargo.



SWEARING-IN CEREMONY — Jordan's newly-appointed ambassador to the United Kingdom, Foad Ayyoub, took the oath Saturday before His Majesty King Hussein. The oath-taking ceremony was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber. King Hussein conferred on Mr. Ayyoub, who was a senior official at the Royal Court, the Al Istikhla Medal of the First Order.

Officials: Low production, reliance on imported animal feed main problems of local breeders

AMMAN (J.T.) — Among the most chronic problems facing cattle and sheep breeders in Jordan and neighbouring countries are low level production and continued reliance on imported animal feed, Agriculture Minister Sabhi Al Qasbi said Saturday.

These issues, coupled with the lack of proper organisation of farmers' work and the presence of a gap between what is being applied in the experimental stations and the fields, tend to complicate agricultural work, the minister said at the opening session of a training seminar on sheep nutrition and management held at Amra Hotel in Amman.

Short and medium term policies are required to deal with such questions, the minister said.

In the short term, he said, modern technology should be applied on a large scale, especially in providing protection to crops from diseases, organising the farmers into societies and groups and embarking on a national programme for improving livestock wealth through artificial insemination techniques, the minister said.

In the medium term, he continued, new methods for marketing products and the provision of animal vaccines are of vital importance. But in the long run, he added, biology-related techniques should be introduced on a commercial basis for improving livestock wealth.

In addition, changes should be done to nutritional patterns like giving priority to the production of white meat and fish and reduc-

ing reliance on red meat as a source of protein Dr. Qasbi said.

The two-week training course is organised by the International Centre for Agriculture Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) and the Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD).

ICARDA Regional Coordinator Nasri Haddad said that the current two week training seminar was part of an overall programme implemented by the Mashreq Project, which is a regional project sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, focusing on the improvement of barley fodder and sheep in the critical rainfall zones of Syria, Jordan and Iraq.

During the course, specialists from ICARDA, ACSAD, Jordan and Cyprus will lecture on sheep responses to nutrition in pregnancy and lactating ewes, management of suckling ewes and their lambs, lamb fattening systems and practical management.

In addition, methods of evaluating nutritive value of feeds and the importance of by-product, vitamin and mineral will be discussed. Moreover, main parasites and diseases that infect sheep in the west Asian region will be discussed with diagnosis and control methods.

The 14 participants from Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Tunisia and Morocco will make field trips to sheep owner flocks and sheep stations for more practical experience.

Seminar discusses use of biotechnology to increase meat production

AMMAN (J.T.) — A two-day meeting started at the University of Jordan Saturday to discuss a cooperative project entitled "Application of Biotechnology to the Development of Agriculture in Jordan" held in cooperation with McGill University in Montreal and sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the University of Jordan.

The purpose of the project is to introduce new biotechnology to improve animal production, develop plant tissue culture and fermentation and enzyme process through professional exchanges and both short and long training programmes.

Dr. Walid Abu Gharbi, the Faculty of Agriculture dean, opened the sessions by underlining the importance of the project for Jordan's agricultural sector. Work on the project, which started in 1990, will continue for five years during which sufficient

cadres of technical teams will acquire training to follow up the implementation of this vital project, Dr. Abu Gharbi said. Of late, voices were raised in the Arab World demanding a cut on food import bills through the introduction of measures leading to increasing food production and self-sufficiency, said Dr. Abu Gharbi.

He said that Jordan, like the other Arab countries, faces a continual decline in livestock products and has to import up to 80 per cent of its needs of red meat and dairy products. Dr. Abu Gharbi added that strenuous efforts should be exerted to bridge the gap between local food production and consumption through the utilisation of modern technology.

William Pound, first secretary at the Canadian embassy here, delivered an address commending the ongoing cooperation between Jordan and Canada and

noting that the project was one of the most vital schemes for Jordan.

The two-day meeting is designed to train 20 participants on various aspects of artificial insemination and embryo transfer in cattle, both in the laboratory and in the farm. Participants will become familiar with the estrous cycle, its manipulation, heat detection, egg fertilisation and implantation, pregnancy diagnosis, semen collection and handling artificial insemination and embryo transfer.

The participants, from the Ministry of Agriculture, cooperative societies and cattle breeders as well as postgraduate students, will hear four detailed lectures on these topics and do practical work.

Participants in the CIDA financed project will be provided with the equipment and facilities for their course.

Salt Chamber of Commerce, AYF to hold elections

SALT (J.T.) — A total of 1,137 merchants in Salt will elect their nine-member Chamber of Commerce Monday.

Competing for the chamber seats are 19 contestants belonging to two blocks, namely the Innovation and Reform Bloc and the Solidarity Bloc, according to a report in the Arabic daily Al Rai.

Also in Salt, elections of the Balqa Chapter of the Arab Youth Forum's (AYF) administrative board will be held Monday at the Youth Department premises. The preparatory committee called on all members of the general assembly to settle their financial obligations before being able to cast their vote.

RJ signs agreement to join central reservation system

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Royal Jordanian Airlines (RJ), along with nine other members of the Arab Air Carriers Organisation (AACO), has signed an agreement in Dubai with the European Comprehensive Distribution Company regarding the introduction of a central reservation system for the participating airline companies.

The system, known as Galileo, collects information to a reservation centre and enables travel agents to book passengers on flights all over the world as well as make other travel-related reservations possible, officials said.

"The Galileo system makes airline reservation easier and enables travel agents to make hotel reservation and car rentals ahead of time," Majdi Sabri, a vice president of RJ said.



Majdi Sabri

Although the agreement finalised last week has been signed, it will be a few months before the system is instated, Mr. Sabri said.

"The technical details remain to be arranged before the system is in effect," Mr. Sabri said. "This reservation system

should be hooked into the main Galileo center in Windsor, Britain, and should become effective by May of 1992."

According to Mr. Sabri, the significance of the agreement signed stems from the fact that this is the first time that Arab carrier companies have agreed to join a global distribution system. He added that he feels certain that the Galileo system will give more accessibility to airlines all over the world.

The nine other participating companies that signed the agreement are Middle East Airlines, Saudi Airlines, Syrian Airlines, Yemeni Airlines, Egyptian Airlines, Libyan Airlines, United Arab Emirates Airlines, Kuwait Airlines and the Gulf Airlines.

The Galileo system is already installed in 33,000 travel agencies and 350 airline companies worldwide.



Kamel Abu Jaber

EC-Jordan council plans November meeting

AMMAN — On the recommendation of the Jordanian government, the European Community has agreed to hold a meeting of the EC-Jordan Cooperation Council in Brussels on Nov. 4.

The Cooperation Council was established under the 1977 cooperation agreement between the EC and Jordan as the body to define periodically guidelines of cooperation. Its specific task is to seek ways and means of establishing closer relations in trade and industry, the development of Jordan's infrastructure and science and technology, the protection of the environment and any other areas upon which the two sides might agree.

Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber is expected to lead the Jordanian delegation to the meeting while the presidency of the EC will lead the European delegation. Other EC member state foreign ministers are expected to attend.

The Cooperation Council meetings will be followed by meetings between the Jordanian delegation and the European commission.

Role of media in controlling environmental pollution discussed

AMMAN (Petra) — Information Minister Mahmoud Al Sharif Saturday inaugurated a six-day symposium on the role of the media in protecting the environment.

The course, organised by the Jordanian Society for the Control of Environmental Pollution (JSCPEP), aims at sensitising people on the importance of addressing environmental issues.

Addressing the opening session, Society President Ahmad Obeidat called for the creation of a public information media support system to contribute towards promoting awareness of environmental issues. He said that Jordan needs clear policies designed to serve national objectives, including environmental integrity.

This cannot be done without a media support system capable of reaching out to the public, he said. The system should be guided by a workplan based on reliable information and scientific and technological facts, taking into consideration the society's values, cultures and the socio-economic dimensions, Mr. Obeidat said.

He added that dealing with the environment, natural resources and the population growth equilibrium is a national duty and a moral responsibility. He stressed the role of the media in promoting environmental awareness among members of the public, saying that such a role is receiving increasing attention in the modern states and advanced communities.

Mr. Obeidat pointed out that environmental issues have a strong relation to the health of the people, the usage of land and water resources, and the planning

of human resources as well as the migration from urban to rural areas.

Mr. Sharif, who opened the course, called for integrating the environment subject into health and education awareness programmes aired by the media. He stressed the role of the media in informing people about dangers of environmental pollution.

The acting resident representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Rafiq Shnkur, voiced the UNDP's support for the protection of environment, noting that the programme is financing, national and regional projects for the protection of the environment such as forestation, increasing the area of rain-fed land and controlling desertification.

He added that the programme will carry out studies aimed at protecting the ozone layer and noted that Jordan has been selected as one of the countries where the study will be carried out. He also said that a team of experts will be arriving in Jordan to discuss means of avoiding environmental disasters caused by chemical and industrial pollutants.

The director of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) for Western Asia, Foad Kanbour, reviewed the international conventions on the environment, and said the programme had concluded eight conventions and 18 protocols on protecting marine life. He pointed out that more than 25,000 people are dying every day because of the mismanagement of water resources while two thirds of the world's population live without pure, safe water.

IBM strongly represented at Amman Computer Expo 91

AMMAN — IBM will be strongly represented at the Amman "Computer Expo 91" show opening on Monday.

IBM dealers in Jordan are being supported by the regional distributor, Gulf Business Machines (GBM) and will take a total floor area of over 200 square meters, almost a third of the central exhibition area.

Well-known local traders CEB, GCE, Unitech and SSC will be showing several IBM products and software, of special interest to small-to-medium business and scientific users.

IBM RISC System 6000 is a desktop supercomputer with nine different configurations offering highly specialized application in science and engineering. It has the capacity to model 3-dimensional constructions of reservoirs and geophysical features and is also increasingly used in civil engineering and construction modeling.

AS/400 'D' series is the latest range of 11 new models in this very popular IBM product series, first introduced in 1988. AS/400 is a highly flexible powerhouse able to operate as a sophisticated machine for



Mustafa Rugibani

advanced applications, as a network server for high-power mainframes, and as a mini-processor serving several terminals.

The highlight of IBM's personal system (PC) range on display will be the new portables, including a laptop and a notebook which IBM has recently added to this pioneering range. Several others PCs will also be demonstrated.

Heading up the GBM representation at the exhibition is Jordan Country Manager Omar Halwani and GBM group General Manager Mustafa Rugibani from headquarters in Bahrain. GBM has exclusive representation of IBM throughout the Gulf states (except Saudi Arabia), and in Yemen and Syria, also covered by Mr. Halwani from the Jordan office.

WHAT'S GOING ON EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by Abdul Rauf Shamma, Khalid Kharis and Mohammad Hussein Abdullah at Abdul Hussein Shamma Foundation Gallery (Open 10 a.m. till 5 p.m.).
- ★ Art exhibition by Iraqi artist Sina Ata at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Sheikh Ibrahim — Johann Ludwig Burchart (1784-1917)" at the reception hall of the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Jordanian artists Ghassan Abu Laban, Hani Bassam, Alir Abu Jdeh and Samir Haddad at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of water colour paintings by Australian artist Jennifer Bowker at Alla Art Gallery.

Doctors decry poor health situation in occupied territories

AMMAN (Petra) — The health situation in the occupied Arab territories was among the main topics discussed by the Arab Doctors Federation (ADF) council meeting, which was concluded in Tunisia in the past week, according to Federation Secretary General Hassan Khreis.

Dr. Khreis, who chaired the 15-member federation council meeting, said the delegates voiced their full support to the Palestinian people and denounced as inhuman Israel's current policies of mass punishment practiced against the Arab people of Palestine.

In its final statement, the federation council called on the international community to deal with world issues on equal footing and implement U.N. Security Council resolutions on Palestine

and the Middle East questions, said Dr. Khreis in a statement upon returning to Amman from the Tunis meeting.

He said that the council voiced backing to the Palestinian people's intifada aimed at regaining their rights and usurped lands. The delegates emphasised the need to protect Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity and denounced Israel's continued occupation of southern Lebanon and its flagrant interference in Lebanon's internal affairs.

The meeting demanded an end to the economic blockade imposed on Iraq which it said has led to a deteriorating health situation in the country.

Dr. Khreis said that the statement voiced support for Sudan's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

VILLA FOR RENT

Location: Dier Gbar (Sweifeh). Unfurnished villa consists of 3 bedrooms, open salon, living and dining area, nice kitchen, maid room, brand new, good for a small family. Rent: JD 6,000. Only 2 years in advance. Call: 687821, 687822.



Ministry of Public Works and Housing Government Tenders Directorate General Tenders announcement Invitation to tender No. (143/91)

Local contractors classified in field of buildings classification grade first or second and international contractors in the same field and classification who are interested in participating in this tender are requested to contact the Government Tender Directorate at Ministry of Public Works and Housing, Amman, Jordan to receive tender documents starting from 24/10/1991 and in accordance with the following terms:-

- Description of tender: Construction of Al-Musheirah Comp. Boys School area (3865)qm². Construction of Al-Rusaifa Comp. Girls School area (3965)qm². Construction of Wadi Al-Haddada Comp. Girls School area (2674)qm².
- The project is partially financed by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
- Work load will be considered in awarding.
- Tender price J.D. 200 non-refundable.
- Last date for purchase of tender documents on November 11th, 1991.
- Offers shall be submitted to the Government Directorate before 13.30 local time on Saturday 23rd of November 1991.

Deputy Chairman, Central Tenders Committee
Government Tenders Directorate
Eng. Mahmud Madi

Jordan Times

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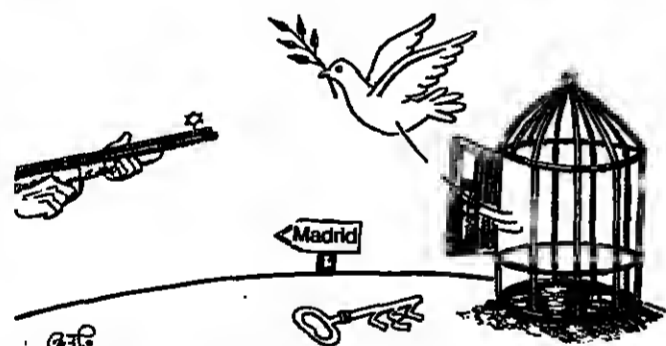
A noble task

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein, in a letter appointing Dr. Abdul Salam Majali, Jordan's chief negotiator, Saturday emphasised the Kingdom's eagerness and keenness to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East region.

"The present stage requires the mobilisation of all national forces to confront the challenge of achieving justice and a just, durable and comprehensive peace for the whole region," the King wrote to Dr. Majali. Dr. Majali and his colleagues were carefully chosen for their fine credentials, competence and desire for peace. They are some of the finest Jordanian diplomats, academics, intellectuals and soldiers. Their mandate, as has been many times articulated by the King, is to seek lasting solutions to the Middle East conflict in order to ensure that "future generations may live a decent, secure and stable life." The Jordanian delegation, all graduates of the King's humane and courageous school, will go into history books as the pioneers of peace. Theirs is a noble, though difficult, task. They venture into a ground never trodden before; a ground full of fear, apprehension and prejudice on all sides. Their mission requires vision, patience, courage and endurance. The hearts of all peace-loving people will be with them. Jordan might be one of the smallest countries in the region in terms of population, area or resources, but it certainly has been a leading nation in its moderation and pursuit of peace.

We go to the peace conference with open hearts and minds and with a determination to spare the future generations the agonies and miseries of war.

The Jordanian people, aware of all past attempts at achieving peace in the region, might be sceptical, but surely they are not discouraged. They look to their negotiating team with hope and they pray to God to lead and inspire them to achieve peace and justice for all.



ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IT SEEMS that Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has opted for early confrontation with the Arab delegation by appointing himself as head of the Israeli delegation to the Madrid conference, said Al Ra'i Saturday. Mr. Shamir is leading a group of extremists who are bound to adopt a very hardened stand designed to render the peace process null and void, said the paper. Of course such manoeuvres can be by no means deter the Arab delegations from seeking the full implementation of the International Legitimacy with the help of the two superpowers who are sponsoring the conference, the paper said. Shamir's plans to sabotage the conference, said the paper, should place the two superpowers face to face with their responsibility, to see to it that the Israelis cannot get their way but must rather comply with U.N. resolutions and the will of the world community. For the Arabs, going to Madrid and sitting at the negotiating table is not an end in itself; they really seek meaningful talks leading to an exchange of land for peace, the paper said. It said that Moscow and Washington shoulder a serious responsibility in this respect because they are concerned over a successful outcome of the parley and the establishment of genuine peace in the Middle East. Perhaps Mr. Shamir's move was meant as a message to the Arabs against whom Israel has been practising psychological warfare to discourage them from pursuing their objectives, said the paper. It said that the Arab parties are genuinely committed to arrive at the aspired peace, regardless of the ferocity of the battle that stands in the way.

It is known worldwide that world Zionism has spared no moment throughout the past decades in exercising pressure on the Vatican to secure its recognition of the state of Israel, said a columnist in Al Dastour Saturday. The Zionists had always sought to achieve this end by reminding the Vatican that the world Jews had been victims of the Western practices in general and the Nazi rule in particular, said Khairi Mansour. The writer recalled that despite approaches to the successive popes in this matter, the Zionists were not able so far to achieve their goals. He said that the popes of Rome had instead reaffirmed the rights of the Palestinian people in their Palestinian homeland, all these past years. Indeed, Pope Paul II confronted former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir with the demand that the Palestinians' rights should be respected, something which prompted Mrs Meir to level insults at the Vatican after the audience with the pope in 1973, said Mansour. The Israelis had always sought to separate the Christian Arabs of Palestine from their Muslim brothers, only to discover with deep frustration that the resistance activities were jointly conducted by the Christians and the Muslims, falling martyrs in defence of their homeland, the writer said. He said that such realities had to be brought in light today on the 13th anniversary of the pontificate of His Holiness Pope John Paul II.

Sunday's economic pulse

Starving the Iraqis — a Nazi crime

An airtight economic blockade is still imposed on the Iraqi people. There are no signs that lifting the blockade is on the horizon, despite the fact that Iraq did accept and implement, to the best of its ability, all the United Nations Security Council resolutions, even those which represent a clear violation of its sovereignty as an independent state and a member of the United Nations.

Never in history was a people subjected to such total embargo. International reports agree that the Iraqi people are on the brink of famine. The rate of deaths among babies rose to 360 per cent above the previous level. Even the Secretariat of the United Nations has advised the Security Council to allow Iraq to sell oil, work at least \$2.4 billion, in order to buy the urgent needs of basic food and medical supplies, but the Security Council refused to budge. It insisted to carry on with the blockade, even if it were threatening the very right to life of an innocent people.

The American president does not deny that the economic blockade imposed against Iraq is no more meant to enforce the United Nations' resolutions. It is meant simply to intervene in Iraq's internal affairs. The president announced repeatedly that

the blockade would not be lifted until after the fall of President Saddam Hussein and his regime. This is the first time in the history of civilised humanity that a mass starvation weapon is being used openly against the whole population of a country for political ends, which are obviously violating the sovereignty of a nation.

The unrelenting determination to starve 18 million human beings and deprive them of food, medicine, air transport and the free exchange of goods and services with the world is a crime against the very basic human rights which the hypocritical West claims to be upholding and promoting in the international arena.

Therefore, the decision-maker, in this case the Security Council, from the official viewpoint, or the American administration, in reality, should bear the moral responsibility for this savage crime against humanity.

Arab countries, whether members of the American alliance against Iraq or not, are jointly and equally to be blamed and will be condemned for allowing the uncivilised economic embargo to continue unabated while they do or say no word to remove it. If it

were true that the blockade was imposed to secure the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait, it is obvious now that this objective has been achieved eight months ago. What we are witnessing is simply an unjustified and inhuman aggression against an Arab people which is supposed to be an integral part of the one Arab Nation; over and above it is a shameful violation of the basic human rights.

When the life of an Arab people is threatened with deadly measures, all Arab peoples and Arab states become responsible, from a national and human points of view. The Arabs must raise their voices and express their anger towards the continuation of the blockade. They should start immediately to supply the Iraqi people openly with its needs of food, medicine and the basic necessities for leading a normal life.

The Arab human rights organisations should be dissolved if they fail to put an end to the ugliest crime against humanity, committed in the twentieth century.

The Nazi crimes committed during World War II look modest and rather civilised compared to the crime of depriving a whole people of its human rights.

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

A missing olive branch

By Thomas L. Friedman

MADRID — With an Arab-Israeli peace conference now virtually certain to take place, what are the prospects that it will actually produce something?

American, Arab and Israeli diplomats are not hiding the fact that they really have no answer to that question. Their attention has been so focused on the exhausting effort to organise the conference that little original or in-depth thought has been given to what can realistically be achieved once the parties get to the table.

Few diplomats doubt that when the conference opens here on Oct. 30, it will appear at first blush to be a breakthrough to a dead end. Syria, Jordan, the Palestinians and Lebanon are expected to demand the return of land occupied by Israel. Israel will decline. The Arabs will call for American pressure on Israel. Israel will say this is not what the conference was supposed to be about, and the whole enterprise will explode in a cacophony of conflicting demands and finger-pointing.

A one-act play?

So Act One is already written. The question, American officials say, is whether there can be an Act Two.

"One should not predict the demise of this conference too quickly," said Stephen P. Cohen of the Montreal-based Centre for Middle East Peace. "The same combination of international pressures which forced the parties to the table in the first place will apply to keeping them there after it starts. It is not going to be easy for anybody to just walk away."

In seeking to organize the conference, the United States was initially driven by President George Bush's desire to prove that the Gulf War could produce something beyond the destruction of half of the Iraqi army and the restoration of the Kuwaiti monarchy, American officials say.

The peace conference, which

Secretary of State James Baker, discussed with Spanish officials today on a stop here on his way home from the Middle East, has been arranged totally at the initiative of Washington, and not through the efforts of the Middle East parties themselves.

After nearly eight months, the United States appears to have succeeded in persuading Arabs and Israelis to come to the table by manipulating pressures on the participants that grew out of the end of the cold war and the end of the Gulf war.

The splintering of the Soviet Union left Syria an orphan, desperately interested in a new relationship with Washington and ready to pay for it by agreeing to direct talks with Israel.

Pressures on Israel

An influx of Soviet Jewish emigres left Israel so strapped for cash to take care of them that it could not afford to spurn the Bush administration's demand for a peace conference. The Iraqi missile attacks on Israeli cities during the Gulf war drove home to Israelis as never before the need to end the regional conflict.

Jordan and the Palestinians were left economically impoverished and diplomatically isolated by their support for Iraq in the "Gulf war. When the Bush Administration offered them a parole on the condition that they attend the conference on the United States' terms, they seized the opportunity.

Adding to the pressures were the end of the cold war and the new cooperation between Moscow and Washington in the Gulf war, which gave Mr. Baker unprecedented tools for diplomatic manoeuvring in the Middle East.

The Soviet Union, for instance, was ready to squeeze the Syrians and Palestinians on Washington's behalf and to restore relations with Israel to promote the conference. The Saudis, who were beholden to Washington for the American role in the Gulf war, used their influence with Damascus.



Sadat's spirit is absent

Such tools can build a conference. Can they build peace agreements?

Neither Lebanon nor Syria, nor Jordan or the Palestinians, are approaching the talks with the philosophy that inspired President Anwar Sadat of Egypt to make peace with Israel in the late 1970's. That philosophy was based first on a gesture of complete reconciliation — which in Mr. Sadat's case meant coming to Jerusalem — and then an offer of full security guarantees in return for an Israeli withdrawal from all lands occupied in the 1967 war.

As the Arab parties approach this conference, they are hoping rather for the least direct contact possible with Israel and for the maximum international pressure on Israel. As the state-run Syrian newspaper Tish said in an editorial last week, "The peace process has entered a decisive stage and the countdown to attend the conference has been launched, both of which require a stern U.S. position to pressure Israel to respond to the calls for peace."

Lack of popular will

The trick for the United States, which sooner or later will have to play the mediator, will be to produce movement toward peace among Middle Eastern leaders who are not interested in real reconciliation at this initial state. What forced Israel to return all of the Sinai to Egypt was the popular will of the Israeli people, a response to Mr. Sadat's overture. That popular will is not to be found anywhere today.

There has been nothing to foster such a spirit. The diplomacy leading up to the peace conference has been a sterile exercise in closed-door deal making involving no more than a few dozen people at most in any country. No Arab or Israeli leader has prepared his people for a historic transformation in relations. But without such a change in attitudes, no real peace will be possible.

On the Palestinian front, as

Mr. Baker has hinted, Washington is already considering proposing that Israel suspend its settlement-building activity in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip in return for an end to the Arab boycott of Israel and a suspension of the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories. So far, Israel has not shown much interest in such a deal.

When the Israelis and Palestinians do begin their direct talks, they will concentrate initially on a five-year transition toward Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, according to the conference invitation. But the two parties have been down this road before, at the autonomy talks at Camp David.

Those talks broke down in 1982 over three fundamental questions, and they have not changed: Who will control the land, who will control water and who will have ultimate authority?

There are three water tables in the West Bank, and Israel takes 75 per cent of that water for its citizens. Finding a plan for Israeli-Palestinian water control will take considerable imagination.

The same is true of the land issue. The only potential growth for Jewish and Arab towns in the West Bank lies in open land, and 70 per cent of it is under Israeli control.

Israel has a list of about 25 areas of administration — including garbage collection, local police authority, traffic and education — which it would be willing to cede to Palestinians during a period of self-rule. The Palestinians say those are wholly insufficient.

The Lebanese refuse to even discuss legitimising what the Israelis call their "security zone" in southern Lebanon, insisting that Israel must simply pull out. Israeli officials say that, given the weakness of the Beirut government, they see no alternative to maintaining the zone as it now exists.

The impasse, between Syria and Israel will be the hardest to bridge, American officials say.

Kurds stranded between war and peace

By Kurt Schork
Reuters

IRBIL — Like other Kurdish cities in northern Iraq, Irbil is stranded between war and peace. Government troops and Peshmerga guerrillas ring the city. The local economy is out of control. Rumours abound.

As a result, Irbil's half million citizens lead lives of desperate uncertainty.

Consider the past couple of weeks. On Wednesday October 16, two Iraqi soldiers were found murdered on the edge of Irbil. The Iraqis responded by firing mortar rounds into the city. A ceasefire was arranged in 30 minutes, but only after one civilian had been killed and 27 wounded.

"The fighting was a shock," said Irbil resident Farid Saad Mohammed. "Of course we knew it could happen, but this had been a quiet city."

He said the number of civilian casualties from the incident reminded people of how vulnerable cities are to Iraqi shelling. Just as the lesson was sinking in, Iraqi troops began to pull back from the city.

One guerrilla commander estimated that between 5,000 and 10,000 men, including some mechanised units, have been recalled to Baghdad from Irbil in

recent days. Similar troop withdrawals are reported from around Kirkuk.

Some say there is rebellion within the army, that President Saddam Hussein is drawing troops back to defend himself. Others swear Saddam is pulling out troops because he is coming north with chemical weapons.

Irbil was still buzzing with speculation about Iraqi troop movements when word came that the border between Iraq and Jordan had been closed. One man said he heard it on VOA (Voice of America), another on the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation).

Everyone agreed a big squeeze was imminent.

The next morning the price of sugar, already prohibitively high, doubled from 250 to 500 dinars for 50 kilograms, prices for other staples jumped accordingly.

The following day sugar dropped back to 300 dinars, but no one knew why.

"I just pray my sugar and tea the way my wholesaler tells me," said one shopkeeper.

As prices were rising, the dinar was falling. A dollar that fetched 10 dinars one night brought 13 the next morning, more if you were prepared to take some counterfeit notes.

For government employees on fixed salaries of a few hundred

dinars a month, these price hikes hit hard. For the unemployed, estimated by some to be 90 per cent of Irbil's workforce, they made little difference.

"The economic situation here is very bad," said Abdul Mohsen Barzani, a Kurdish leader in Irbil. "Most men have no work. They are just sitting and waiting to see if it will be war or peace."

On Wednesday October 23, Baghdad announced that fuel deliveries to Irbil were being cut off until further notice. Many petrol stations closed at once. Long queues formed at the few that stayed open, guarded by Peshmerga with machineguns.

"I am very worried," said taxi driver Zairr Abdullah, 45. "The last time there was no benzene there was during the intifada (Kurdish uprising). How will we get to the mountains if the fighting starts again?"

There is no official explanation why fuel supplies have been cut. There are, of course, plenty of rumours.

Khabir Akmed Aziz, a petrol station manager, said the problem could be that diesel fuel currently sells in Turkey for nearly 70 times the price in Iraq.

According to Mr. Aziz, there is no way to transport benzene to Irbil — because every available tanker is hauling diesel fuel to the Turkish border.

Bush may get less than 'territory for peace'

By Barry Schweld
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — "Land for peace" is President Bush's rallying cry for the Mideast peace conference, but success may be measured with results well short of that goal.

The White House, announcing all the parties had accepted the joint U.S.-Soviet invitations, appealed to the Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians on Wednesday night to approach the Madrid conference with "an open mind."

Perhaps they will, but the fact is they are going in with what appear to be irreconcilable positions.

Having pushed them this far is historic, in and of itself. Getting some sort of partial agreement would spell success.

The most promising short-term goal is limited self-rule for the Palestinians. Also, a senior U.S. official said last weekend, there ought to be some ability at the peace conference to move forward in terms of Israeli relations with Jordan and to deal with the situation in Lebanon.

These all fall short of a comprehensive settlement of the 43-year Arab-Israeli conflict based on land for peace. And they may appear attainable mostly because they are not as formidable as the Israeli-Syrian dispute — "the

toughest nut," is the way a senior U.S. official described it last Friday night in Jerusalem.

If those goals are reached, Bush and Secretary of State James Baker would be able to claim success approaching President Carter's virtuoso performance at Camp David, Md., in 1978 that produced an Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty the following year.

At the outset the divergence in positions is stark.

Israel, for instance, says it will not yield and more of the territory the Arabs lost in the 1967 war. It is offering peace-for-peace.

Syria, meanwhile, refuses to offer peace for the Golan Heights, the territory it seeks to recover. And Jordan may be in no position to take back West Bank land even if Israel relinquishes it.

At the same time, the United States may seek conditions on loan guarantees for Israel next year, depending on progress made by then in the peace talks. Mr. Baker told senators at a private briefing Thursday.

Sen. Larry Craig, an Idaho Republican, said Baker reiterated the administration's pledge not to seek further delay in meeting Israel's request for \$10 billion in loan guarantees to settle Soviet emigres. "But he said, 'I may at the time ... depending on prog-

ress in the talks, want to come back and discuss conditions'" on the aid, Mr. Craig told reporters.

It may be some comfort to U.S. peacemakers to recall the gap between Israel and Egypt also was wide.

Israel held the Sinai. Jewish settlers were there. And so were two of Israel's strategic airfields.

The late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, meanwhile, was insisting on every inch of the Sinai. And he was saying peace would have to await the next generation.

When the smoke cleared, however, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin yielded all of Sinai, including a valuable strip he had tried to retain up to the end of the negotiations. And Sadat gave Israel a peace treaty — in his generation.

It was a huge success for the honest broker, the United States.

Cast in a catalytic role again, the U.S. strategy is aimed at promoting a partial settlement between Israel and the Palestinians who live on the West Bank and Gaza.

The Palestinians would gain more control over their day-to-day affairs, living under limited self-rule for five years. The main incentive for the Palestinians would be that negotiations for a permanent solution would begin within three years.

King: Jordan committed to peace

(Continued from page 1)

and Israel, before the beginning of the process, their positions were very hard and did not show any flexibility. I believe that results were achieved later and I hope this will be the case in this situation.

Asked whether there will be any compromises during the conference, the King said it was very difficult to go into it deeply.

However, he said, the foundations are well-known: Resolutions 242 and 338, land for peace, the Palestinian rights and the rights of all to live in peace and security.

He noted that the regional dimension is a new factor and expressed belief that it might be useful at this time to talk about rejection.

"I think it is probably counterproductive to speak at this time of oppositions and I try to avoid talking about the process will be based on. In the different categories we are talking about Israel and the Palestinians, Jordan and the Palestinians and the umbrella for a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, Syria and Israel, Lebanon and Israel and we are talking about the regional dimension as well. To put prior conditions, I believe, is counterproductive because I have attended enough summits and meetings that were held within the Arab context, and I know how difficult it was at the very beginning of some of them. So I hope that the situation will not be made more difficult by people who held positions they find now difficult to abandon.

On Syria's position towards regional talks, the King said: "We have committed ourselves to going to that regional conference and believe it must be held and there is no change as far as we are concerned and we hope that all will attend because after all if we look at it in other way, with a comprehensive solution which will include all in the region the future will be very bleak and will be very difficult. So I do not see why. May be the Syrian attitude is that we should not move on regional issues before settling the basic ones, but I believe that the two should go together, and the regional dimension gives us a promise of what can happen if peace is achieved.

In reply to a question on Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's move to lead the Israeli delegation to Madrid while all Arab delegations to the conference are led by foreign ministers, the King said it was up to the Israeli prime minister to decide as to who should lead his country's delegation.

Asked about the possibility of forming a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation to solve the Palestine question, the King said Jordan had made a proposal for that several years ago. "However in the future, when they enjoy their legitimate rights on their soil, the bond will be established, the King said. When resolutions 242 and 338 are implemented, there will be three options: a confederation or an independent Palestinian state or a confederation between Jordan and Palestine, he said.

King meets joint delegation

(Continued from page 1)

open in Spanish capital Madrid a few days from now.

"I am quite confident that I have selected for this mission one of our ablest and faithful men assisted by an elite of Jordanian citizens who seek to bolster the nation's strength through carrying out their duty and through their highest degrees of awareness, vigilance and deep sense of national responsibility.

"As we hereby express our absolute support for your national mission we pray to God that He may lead you to success and to inspire you with guidance towards what is most beneficial for your country and nation."

The Associated Press said that Prime Minister Masri also recommended to King Hussein advisory committee that will not participate in negotiations or face-to-face talks with Israel.

The committee included, according to an official quoted by the AP:

— Nabih Nimer, a native of Tulkarem in the West Bank and Ambassador to Cairo.

— Adel Insheid, from Jenin in the West Bank, head of the Department of the Palestinian

affairs at the Foreign Ministry. — Abdullah Khatib, from Hebron in the West Bank, president of Jordan's charitable missions.

— Qassem Al Ghazawi, from Irbid, an adviser at the Foreign Ministry.

Basel Agel, a Jerusalem native and aviation expert.

— Talal Alkhas, a Circassian from Jordan.

The official said Marwan Muasher will be the spokesman of the delegation but will not participate in face-to-face negotiations with Israel.

Dr. Muasher, born in Salt, is a former Prime Minister spokesman. He is now the director of Jordan's Information office in Washington D.C.

The negotiators will maintain contact with the government in Jordan on developments in negotiations.

The official said the highest authority on the negotiations by the joint delegation will be the consultative body chaired by King Hussein and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

"Final decisions regarding any developments in negotiations will be made here in Amman," he said.

Subsidy cut will not hurt poor

(Continued from page 1)

In some families, the consumption of the subsidised products is not of a level that would result in any significant difference in expenses.

On the other side of the coin, there are also families who, in the words of a supermarket owner, "come in their latest model Mercedes-Benz cars and produce coupons" to get the subsidised items.

Mr. Abu Ragheb indicated that the government was looking into means to tighten the coupon system, but he did not elaborate.

However, he pointedly referred to the fact that subsidised bread is freely available to everyone, including commercial establishments and restaurants.

"The actual price of bread should be around 210 fils a kilogramme," he said. "We are subsidising it by almost two-thirds of the cost, making it available at 75 fils a kilogramme to everyone," he noted.

"Perhaps we might introduce a coupon system for bread, while setting a price ceiling for bread prices in the market," he said. "All options are under consideration. Nothing has been finalised," he added.

Palestinian hopes dying in Shatila

By Robert Fisk

JAMES Baker fell into the habit of saying that in Middle East peace talks, the Palestinians had the most to gain and the most to lose. In the crumbling tenement of Shatila, however, they are all going to lose.

Samir Sheikh is never going to go home to Palestine, whatever happens in Madrid. Nor is Abu Ahmad. Mahmoud Ayoub and his son Fathi are going to rot away for the rest of their lives in their concrete but beside the mass graves that contain the victims of the 1982 massacre. It is a new phenomenon, this depression in the camps of Lebanon, born of cynicism and a growing realisation that the new world order is not meant for them. They talk wearily on betrayal but they do so with profound resignation. They survived the massacre but their hope has died. Like most of the 250,000 Palestinians in Lebanon, they come from the wrong part of "Palestine."

Mr. Sheikh, for example, came from Acre, Mr. Abu Ahmad from Haifa. The Ayoub family home was in Safad. In the fetid lane between their shacks in Shatila, you will find whole families who can give the names of their home villages. All are in Galilee. For virtually every Arab who fled to Lebanon in 1948 came from that part of Palestine which is now Israel — the one nation whose own territory is very definitely not up for discussion in Middle East peace talks.

Mr. Ayoub wears a clean shirt but has not shaved for a couple of days. Given his age — 65 — and his suffering, he looks young, but he was old enough to have fought in the 1948 war. "I will tell you my story and you will understand why I have no hope," he says. "In 1948 I was fighting with the Arab militia against the Jews. The Jews had captured Acre but we held a good ridge line about 17 kilometres away at a place called Majdel Kroon. The Arab armies were with us. They called themselves the 'Arab Liberation Army'. There were Egyptians, Syrians, and Lebanese with us. Then one night, at Majdel Kroon, they received secret orders from their leader, Fawzi Al Qawukji, to abandon us. In the morning, the Arab armies had gone. We were alone and the Jews were advancing on us. This



Three years after the massacre, children in the Shatila camp have 'school' amidst the rubble (UNRWA photo)

is what the other Arabs did to us. And that is how they will treat us at a peace conference."

Mr. Ayoub rescued his family during the 1982 massacre at Shatila by leading them out of their home at night while the Phalangists, allowed into the camp by the Israelis, were murdering their neighbours. But he lost one of his sons in the 1986 camp war against the Amal militia. "I want to ask you this," he says with something approaching venom. "How did the camp war come about? Why were Amal fighting us? Who was supporting Amal?" Syria was supporting Amal, of course, because Syria wished to wipe out the Palestinian camps. But Mr. Ayoub does not say so, not least because plain clothes Syrian security police are in the camp. They control all the entrances to Shatila — just in case Mr. Arafat's forces try to return.

No one in Shatila — nor in the other 12 Palestinian camps in Lebanon — has any illusions about the role of the Arab nations which claim to be their protectors. Crushed by the collapse of their former Soviet ally and awed by America's apparently invincible power, the Arab regimes have allowed Israel to vet the Palestinian representatives to peace talks. They have even accepted United Nations resolutions as a subject for negotiations at the conference.

For the Palestinians the Arab humiliation is little less than extraordinary. U.N. Security Council demands for an Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab land are, after all, supposed to be adhered to — not discussed. Yet scarcely an Arab leader now points to the ambiguity of President Bush's approach to such resolutions. U.N. Resolution 242

calls for the withdrawal of Israel from occupied land because of "the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war." And on Aug. 8 last year there was Mr. Bush proclaiming — in condemnation of the Iraqis, of course — that "the acquisition of territory by force is unacceptable."

On the other side of that mass grave at Shatila, down the almost equally filthy lanes of the Mar Elias camp, Zuhair Natour ponders this question with unrehearsed cynicism. In the office of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, emotion takes second place for Mr. Natour and his comrades. "What can be achieved from these 'peace negotiations'?" he asks. "The whole talks will last, we are told, up to six years but the immigration of Soviet Jews into Israel continues. How many new settlements will the Israelis be able to

build in that time? As for our people here in Lebanon, well..." Mr. Natour smiles. "We must have human rights."

Once he would have demanded a nation for them. Now the Palestinians ask for human rights. Mr. Natour has silver, curly hair and smokes an obnoxious aromatic tobacco in a friendly pipe. A generator roars intermittently, the lights brightening and then fading alarmingly in his office. "A lot of Palestinians are not clear in their minds what to do," he says. "The end of the Soviet systems, the catastrophic results of the Gulf war, America as the only superpower — these things are all indications of our weakness. Arab rejectionism of Israel is finished. Now it is Israel which won't recognise Arab-Palestinian statehood. The Americans wanted the PLO to accept any kind of Palestinian representation

politically acceptable to Israel. But in practice, there can be no concrete results in any peace conference unless the PLO accepts the representatives. Otherwise the conference will be held only to settle relations between Israel and three Arab regimes."

But of the Palestinians in Lebanon, Mr. Natour is deeply pessimistic. "They cannot go home. They are a minority group in Lebanon now. The Lebanese president made a statement not long ago in which he said that 120,000 of them are not officially registered here. People fear he means to get rid of them. But where would they go?"

United Nations officials regard this figure as preposterous and say the Lebanese cannot evict the Palestinians. Syria will not take them, Jordan, already burdened with hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from Kuwait, would refuse to accept them and "home" — "Palestine" — is clearly not open to them. Ele Saaf, the director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in Lebanon, puts the figure at around 226,000.

It is a bleak prospect for those who survived one of the worst massacres of Middle East history. The grave of hundreds of Palestinian victims lies today behind a screen of plane trees. With considerable spite, the Amal militia have turned the plot into a football field, but memories cannot be so easily obscured. "I cannot keep control of my mind when I remember what happened," Mr. Abu Ahmad says. "Sometimes I go to the mass grave and say a verse from the Koran. I am speechless when I think about it." He passes for a moment, debating whether to say what is in his mind. "Sometimes when I am really happy, even when I am making love to my wife, I recall all those bodies and I dry up and feel as if I am dead. We are the victims. Our hope has gone."

A senior U.N. official at Shatila is quite frank. "These Palestinians will never return home. They will not be thrown out by the Lebanese government. Their fate is that they will never leave here. Their battle is finished. It is all over for them." Does Samir Sheikh still believe that one day he will return to Palestine? "Yes," he says with cruel conviction. "In my dreams." — The Independent.

Bush love for foreign affairs could hurt him in 1992

By Steve Holland

WASHINGTON — George Bush loves foreign affairs so much that he even slipped a line or two about U.S.-Soviet relations into a speech condemning pornography.

This political schizophrenia could cost him votes in 1992.

"As the Soviets now have come forward to accept many of our challenges in reducing nuclear weapons, one of the great joys I take is to think what this means to our grandchildren," the president told the Religious Alliance Against Pornography at a recent meeting on the evils of child pornography.

As for domestic policy, Mr. Bush insists he cares, but he let slip a comment the other day that seemed to confirm suspicions that he views domestic issues the way

a schoolboy views homework.

After answering questions about Judge Clarence Thomas's Supreme Court nomination, then in trouble in the Senate, Mr. Bush perked up visibly when asked about the chances of convening a Middle East peace conference later this month.

"Now we're talking substance, foreign relations here," he said, and waded into the topic.

As it turned out, U.S.-Soviet diplomacy had made sufficient headway by last Friday for invitations to be issued to Israel and Arab states for a conference to start in Madrid on Oct. 30.

But as the economy sags, health care costs soar and crime, drug abuse and poor education erode the "underpinnings" of U.S. society, Mr. Bush finds himself increasingly under fire from Democrats who have found in

domestic problems the issues they need for the 1992 presidential election campaign.

A recent New York Times-CBS News poll found that 59 per cent of Americans felt Mr. Bush was neglecting domestic issues and 78 per cent said he should spend more time on the economy.

A frequent comment of Mr. Bush's critics is that he seems more interested in the plight of the Soviet Union and Iraqi Kurds than he is in America's poor, sick and unemployed.

"When people say that we have no domestic agenda, they simply have not seen the facts," Mr. Bush complained last week. "We have a good, forward-looking agenda. Congressional leaders just won't act on it."

Mr. Bush's domestic programme is stalled between the White

House and the Democratic-led Congress, but he seems to lack interest in giving it the sort of high-profile push that he gave to containing Iraqi aggression or working with the Kremlin.

In a speech to Congress last March celebrating the U.S.-led victory in Gulf war, he had a chance to set some lofty domestic goals. But he drew the ire of Democratic congressional leaders by urging them to get moving on two relatively pedestrian measures — a transport bill and anti-crime legislation.

The main thrust of his effort to get the economy moving is to dust off his call for a cut in the capital gains tax on investment profits, an idea rejected by the Democrats as a tax break for the rich.

Analysts doubt it will ever be approved unless it becomes part of a compromise that involves tax relief for the middle class, which the Democrats could take credit for passing.

Mr. Bush's effort to get tough on crime has been debated between the White House and Capitol Hill for two-and-a-half years, and is just now inching toward approval.

Mr. Bush, a life member of the National Rifle Association, opposed a provision many Americans favour — a ban on the sort of semi-automatic weapons used by a Texas gunman to kill 22 people in a mad spree last Wednesday.

"Obviously, when you see somebody go berserk and get a weapon and go in and murder people, of course, it troubles me. But what I don't happen to have the answer to, is can you legislate that behaviour away?" commented Mr. Bush after the massacre.

A majority in the House of Representatives took the same view and rejected the gun-control proposals.

Mr. Bush has shown little sign of taking the advice of Dan Rostenkowski, the Illinois Democrat chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, who has urged the president personally to get interested in a reform of the U.S. health care system.

Some 34 million Americans are without health insurance, but the Bush administration has never proposed its own plan for changing the current profit-driven system.

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Kasparov, Karpov adjourn with a draw looking likely

TILBURG, Netherlands (R) — The two men who have dominated the chess world for 16 years met in the seventh round of the Interpolis Tilburg Tournament, and after a titanic struggle adjourned on move 61.

The 158th meeting between world champion Garry Kasparov and ex-world champion Anatoly Karpov came as Kasparov led the tournament after playing some spectacular chess.

Karpov, champion from 1975 to 1985, was looking for his first win in seven games.

It began conventionally enough as a king's Indian defence, with Karpov as white expanding on the queen's side and Kasparov attacking on the king's side.

Each neglected defence to press home their attack. When the tactical dust cleared a fascinating and complex strategic struggle was set, with most of the watching grandmasters favouring Karpov. By move 30 he had three minor pieces for a rook and four pawns.

Karpov, with five draws and a loss at Tilburg, was itching for a win, and pressed on even when observers were convinced a draw was certain.

Dutch grandmaster Jan Timman blazed his white pieces through Viktor Korchnoi's French defence in 25 moves.

The 60-year-old Soviet emigre played an ambitious pawn advance on move 50, but it was in order. Timman shortly afterwards sac-

rificed a knight for one of the pawns shielding Korchnoi's castled king, and in a devastating assault forced the naked king out into the centre of the board where he was easy meat for checks.

British grandmaster Nigel Short, as white, impressively beat Gata Kamsky in a 33-move Sicilian defence when the 17-year-old ran out of time.

India's Viswanathan Anand continued his good run with a 52-move win with black against competition tailender Yevgeny Baryev.

They played the Slav variation of the queen's gambit declined, and the Soviet player, desperate for points, pushed too hard, playing a double rook sacrifice.

Anand returned one of the rooks for a superior rook against bishop ending.

With five wins in seven games, Anand is looking on good form, experts said. If Kasparov draws, Anand will be breathing down his neck just half a point away.

Chess may have been invented in India thousands of years ago, but India never had a grandmaster to grace the modern game until Anand qualified in 1988.

Now the 21-year-old former junior world champion is in second place in the toughest chess tournament of all time, with only world champion Kasparov ahead of him.

With a single point between them, there are eight rounds left for Anand to make his mark.

Anand, rated by his ELO grading of results at number nine in the world, is very much considered a world championship contender in the future.

"He may be a winner here, and he is certainly a world championship candidate," Soviet grandmaster Genna Sosonko said.

But the tall, bespectacled



Garry Kasparov

Anand is modest.

"I really think it is quite sensible that you don't think about it (being world champion) until you are number two in the world. It is more of a dream than an ambition yet," he told Reuters.

Kasparov's next defence of his title is likely to be in 1993. But Anand's dreams of challenging him were rudely shattered in August when he narrowly lost his quarter final eliminator in Brussels to Karpov, despite playing some elegant and exciting chess.

On Thursday Anand had his revenge by beating Karpov in a dramatic game in the sixth round of the Interpolis Tournament.

"The whole game is just strewn with mistakes (on both sides)," Anand said as he looked over the game afterwards.

"I don't care if it is not so nice, so long as I won. I played so many beautiful games and have

not won," he said, referring to the eight-game Brussels match which he lost 4-1/2 to 3-1/2.

A measure of Anand's progress is that Thursday's win has given him better than 50 per cent in his encounters with Karpov, a man who for 10 years was unassailable as world champion and is still in the world's top three.

But Anand must still hone aspects of his play to get the best out of his open attacking style.

Experts here say he could easily have won all his first four Tilburg games if only he had not played so quickly.

Anand concedes there is some truth in this, citing his lost game in the second round against Dutch grandmaster Jan Timman.

"In a winning position against Timman I just completely relaxed. I thought 'ah this is it,'" he said.

Crown produces 1st \$100m winner

POMPANO BEACH, Florida (AP) — John Campbell, who says he doesn't set goals, became the first driver in history to reach \$100 million in purses when he dominated the Breeders' Crown Harness races Friday night.

Campbell won three races and had a second, a fourth and a fifth while driving in seven of the eight Breeders' Crown events at Pompano Beach.

His purse money of \$581,030 boosted his career earnings to \$100,360,795.

"I never set goals," he said. "You just try to do the best you can every night, every race."

His best has enshrined the 36-year-old native of Canada in the hall of fame.

Campbell's three wins, which gave him 19 in 82 Breeders' Crown finals since the series began in 1984, came with Miss Easy in the 3-year-old filly pace, Hazelton K in the 2-year-old filly

pace, and Ambro Keepsake in the 2-year-old filly trot.

He was second with Royal Strength in the 2-year-old colt and gelding trot, fourth with Shamoon Recruit in the 2-year-old colt and gelding pace, and fifth with Art's Place in the 3-year-old colt and gelding pace.

He failed to get a piece of the purse in the 3-year-old filly trot and didn't drive in the 3-year-old colt and gelding trot.

Campbell wasn't the only story Friday night.

Miss Easy and King Conch, a 2-year-old trotting colt, set world records.

Trainers Per Eriksson and Bruce Nickells each won two races. Eriksson had Giant Victory in the 3-year-old colt and gelding trot and King Conch in the 2-year-old colt and gelding trot. Nickells won with Miss Easy and Hazelton K, each driven by Campbell and each co-owned by Lou Guida, who now has owned at least a piece of 13 Breeders' Crown winners.

Miss Easy's performance was perhaps the most impressive of the night. She had lost her three previous races before it was discovered she had a lung infection. Racing on the diuretic lasix for

the first time, she won by 1 1/2 lengths in 1:52, a world record for the mile on a five-eighths-mile track. She paid \$3.

King Conch paid \$35.20 after winning by 8 1/2 lengths in a world-record 1:56 2/5.

Another eye-catching performance was turned in by Giant Victory, the Hambletonian winner, in the 3-year-old colt and gelding trot. He made a move four horses wide on the final turn, then took the lead from Super Pleasure in the deep stretch to win by 1 1/2 lengths in 1:56 and pay \$7.

Ambro Keepsake gave Campbell his first victory of the night by dominating the 2-year-old filly trot by 9 1/2 lengths in 1:58 1/5. She paid \$7.

Hazelton K took the lead just after the half-mile, then held off Laag's Pleasure by three-quarters of a length in the 2-year-old filly pace. She was timed in 1:53 4/5 and paid \$6.

In the final race of the night, three wizzards (\$8) scored a quick upset by winning the 3-year-old colt and gelding pace by two lengths over Stomatin' Jesse in 1:52 2/5. Highly regarded Die Laughing finished fourth and Art's Place was fifth.

'New coach will make Italian fans happy'

ROME (AP) — The Italian Soccer Federation presented new national team coach Arrigo Sacchi to the media, praising him as the man who will restore the prestige, enthusiasm and winning spirit of the "azzurri."

Going further during Sacchi's introduction, Italian Federation President Antonio Matarrese said the new coach will make "Italian fans smile again."

"It's a day of great importance for Italian soccer," Matarrese said.

Sacchi, a former coach of AC Milan who replaced Azzeglio Vicini after Italy was virtually eliminated from the final round of the European Championships, said he was prepared to face greater difficulties.

Twins, Braves look forward to next series game

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — After one of the bigger routs ever in the World Series, the Atlanta Braves and Minnesota Twins dismissed the mismatch and said it meant nothing.

At least, that's what they said. "I really believe my players, after five to seven minutes, forget about the games," Twins manager Tom Kelly said during Friday's off day. "You ask what the score was and they don't know. I even lost count."

Well, in case he needs reminding, here's what happened Thursday night: The Braves set a record for most runs by an NL team in a World Series game and established another mark with 34 total bases in halting Minnesota 14-5.

The Braves rolled up the biggest series score since the New York Yankees trounced Pittsburgh 16-3 in 1960 and, more importantly, took a 3-2 edge in games.

"Whenever we lose, we try to forget about it, too," David Justice, who homered and drove in five runs for Atlanta, said Friday. "I think that's a good thing to do. But we hope the game carries over."

Steve Avery, the NL playoff MVP, will try to win Atlanta's first World Series championship when he faces Scott Erickson in Game 6 here Saturday night.

Avery and Erickson pitched against each other in Game 3, and neither got a decision in Atlanta's 5-4 victory in 12 innings.

Avery gave up four hits in seven innings, while Erickson was knocked out in the fifth inning.

"These people have pitched an awful lot of innings," Kelly said. "You can't be surprised when they get tired."

Kelly's bullpen is also a little fatigued. Since Rick Aguilera gave up the winning run in Game 3, ending a streak of 27 2-3 series innings without an earned run by Braves relievers since 1987, Minnesota's bullpen has allowed 13 earned runs and 15 hits in 7 1/3 innings.

To win this weekend, the Braves will need to overcome two peaks: They'll be playing at the Metrodome, and against history.

The Twins are 6-0 in World Series games in the dome, including two victories last week.

"I think we improved a lot over the first game we played there," Avery said.

Justice agreed, saying some of the horror stories the Braves had heard simply weren't so.

"When we first came here, we were told that you can't take your eye off the ball and that you can't hear," Justice said. "It's true, you can't hear. But you can take your eye off the ball for a moment when it's on the way down. Just don't do it when the ball is going up."

Justice and second baseman Mark Lemke botched the first ball of Game 2 when Lemke couldn't see it, then couldn't hear Justice calling for it.

But the teams seemed to reverse roles in Atlanta, where the Braves won two close games before ending their home season with Thursday night's bash.

Both the Braves and Twins are aware this is the same scenario as in the 1987 World Series. That time, Minnesota won the first two at home, lost three at St. Louis and took the last two at the Metrodome.

"It's the only thing I've got to fall back on," Kelly said.

Justice said he had talked earlier in the day with Terry Pendleton, who played for St. Louis in that World Series, about what happened.

"He mentioned it," Justice said. "But to me, that's a negative focus."

"I think the Twins are a better team at home. We know that. But I think — no, I know — we can win, one of the last two."

Besides, the Braves have been through this before, sort of. Last week, they went into Pittsburgh facing a 3-2 deficit in the NL playoffs. Avery won game 6 and John Smoltz shut out the Pirates in Game 7 to bring Atlanta its first pennant.

"Since we've already done it, we know we can do it again," Justice said.

If game 7 is needed this time, Smoltz will start.

Smoltz, though, doesn't think he'll be needed. Shortly after the Braves' big win over the Twins, Smoltz was asked about how he might do in another seventh game, and he shook his head. "I'm done," he said. "Mr. Avery is going to take care of it."



In Amman Little League Junior Division action Friday, a UPS striker (far left) scores the tying goal against Union Bank.

Amman Little League soccer games begin

Soccer matches held Friday Oct. 25, 1991

TOTS	(0)	Vs	Vita	(0)
Marriott	(0)	Vs	Pirelli	(0)
Philadelphia				
JUNIORS				
Aqaba Shipping	(0)	Vs	Foxboro	(2)
Soudani	(1)	Vs	Al Hikma	(7)
UPS	(1)	Vs	Union Bank	(1)
GEMT	(0)	Vs	Epson	(1)

SENIORS				
Chilli House	(0)	Vs	Lois	(1)
Int. Traders	(2)	Vs*	Nash/Ebb	(3)

STANDINGS

TOTS	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pt.
Pirelli	3	2	1	8	2	8
Vita	2	2	2	4	3	6
Marriott	2	2	2	4	5	6
Philadelphia	1	2	3	2	8	4

JUNIORS						
Foxboro	6	0	1	16	5	12
UPS	4	2	1	10	4	10
Al Hikma	2	3	2	12	7	7
Aqaba Ship.	3	1	3	7	5	7
GEMT	3	1	3	6	5	7
Union Bank	2	3	2	3	3	7
Epson	2	2	3	6	9	6
Soudani	0	0	7	5	27	0

SENIORS						
Lois	4	1	1	17	12	9
Chilli House	2	2	2	8	7	6
Int. Traders	2	1	3	17	16	5
Nash/Ebb	2	0	4	7	14	9

Cup matches on Oct. 25, 1991

MIDS						
Tramec	(4)	Vs	Comcent	(1)		
Delta	(1)	Vs	Istiklal	(3)		

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DUCK SOUP

North-South vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ 6 2
♥ A 7
♦ J 10 8 6
♣ A K 9 7 5

WEST
♠ A Q 9 4
♥ K Q J 10 2
♦ 9 4
♣ 8 2

EAST
♠ 10 8 5 3
♥ 9 8 6 4 3
♦ 10
♣ Q J 10

SOUTH
♠ K J 7
♥ 5
♦ A K Q 7 3 2
♣ 6 4 3

The bidding:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ 1 ♠
2 ♠ Pass 5 ♠ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠.
South devised a reasonable line of play for the five-diamond contract. See if you can find a better one.

South might have been wiser to have cut two hearts on the second round rather than vault directly to five diamonds. As you can see, that would have led to a contract of three no trump, which would have been impervious to any distribution of the cards. Five diamonds was not, and declarer did not have the skill to match his bidding ambitions.

Declarer won the first trick in

dummy and drew trumps in two rounds. Next, declarer led a club toward dummy, intending to duck if West produced the queen. When West followed low, declarer rose with the table's king, ruffed a heart and led another club, intending to pursue the same plan. After winning the ace, declarer tried to throw West in with a club. Unfortunately, East won and the marked spade shift netted the defenders two more tricks for a one-trick set.

Declarer's line was pretty good. It would have succeeded had West held the queen of clubs guarded no more than twice, or if East held the queen of spades (the ace was certainly marked with West in light of the overall). But as is often the case, declarer made his mistake at the very first trick. South should have let West's king win despite holding a singleton in the suit!

Now declarer can win the heart continuation (two shifts is any better), discarding a club from hand. After drawing trumps, declarer cashes the ace and king of clubs. If both defenders follow, declarer ruffs a club and gets back to dummy with a trump to take two spade discards on the good clubs. Should the clubs turn out to be 4-1, declarer must fall back on a finesse of the jack of spades as the best chance for the contract.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



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THE BETTER HALF

By Harris

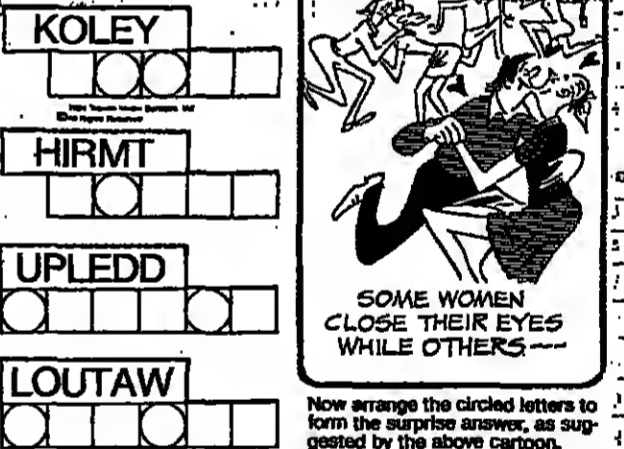


"Shoot some of that in my ear. My brain feels dusty."

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

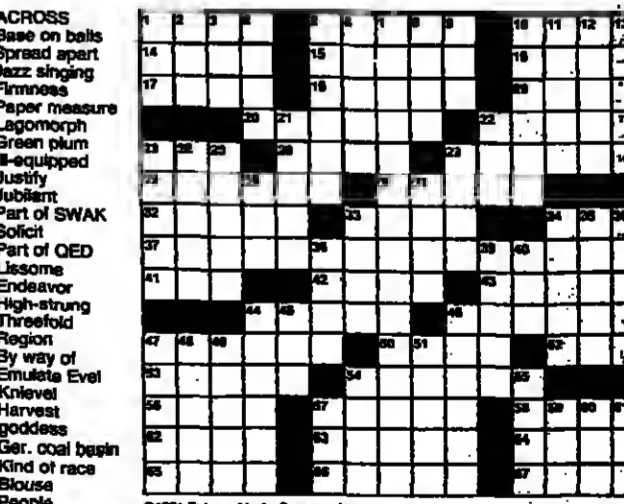
Answer here: K O L E Y H I R M T U P L E D D L O U T A W

Yesterday's Jumbles: CHIDE SHINY UNWISE TURKEY

Answer: The bigger one's mouth is, the better it looks... WHEN SHUT

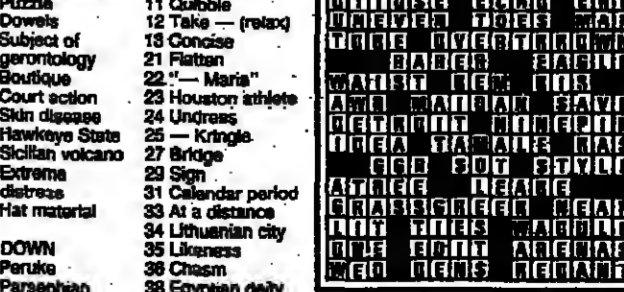
THE Daily Crossword

by Samuel K. Fogner



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



10 Religious sect

11 Outable

12 Take — (relex)

13 Concise

14 Flatten

15 "Marie"

16 Houston athlete

17 Undress

18 — Kringle

19 Bridge

20 Sign

21 Calendar period

22 At a distance

23 Lihuanian city

24 Liveness

25 Egyptian deity

26 Wild fancy

27 Wreath

28 Liveness

29 Forty

30 winks

31 45 Diddy

32 More massive

33 Hilarious

34 Parched

35 Start eating

36 Specialized vocabulary

37 Actor Richard

38 Seemingly

39 "I — Camera"

40 Farm implement

41 60 Horse

42 Light touch

Cyprus, Syria sign tourism promotion pact

Nicosia (AP) — Cyprus and Syria signed an agreement Friday to promote tourism, including programmes to attract visitors from distant markets such as the United States and Japan. The two agreed to encourage their national airlines to offer favourable air fares and to establish a regular sea line between the island and Syria in an effort to increase tourist traffic between them, the Cyprus News Agency reported. Also decided to arrange meetings between travel agents of their two countries to deepen their understanding of what each has to offer. They agreed to exchange information on legislation and regulations on tourism investment practices, and Syria's delegates expressed the wish to attract investors for projects in their country, the news agency said.

Financial Markets

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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE Date 25/10/91	NEW YORK CLOSE Date 24/10/91
Sterling Pound*	1.7130	1.7115
Deutsche Mark	1.6999	1.6993
Swiss Franc	1.4875	1.4868
French Franc	5.8010	5.7945
Japanese Yen	131.49	131.24
European Currency Unit	1.2045	1.2020 **

* USD Per STG

** European Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Date: 25/10/91

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.25	5.37	5.37	5.56
Sterling Pound	10.45	10.37	10.18	10.25
Deutsche Mark	9.12	9.37	9.37	9.37
Swiss Franc	8.00	8.31	8.25	8.25
French Franc	8.87	9.06	9.18	9.18
Japanese Yen	6.53	6.25	5.93	5.75
European Currency Unit	9.62	9.75	9.81	9.87

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals

Date: 26/10/91

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	350.35	7.00	Silver	4.105	.91

* 21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 26/10/91

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6860	0.6880
Sterling Pound	1.7736	1.7795
Deutsche Mark	0.4031	0.4051
Swiss Franc	0.4607	0.4630
French Franc	0.1181	0.1187
Japanese Yen*	0.5009	0.5235
Dutch-Guilder	0.3578	0.3596
Swedish Krona	0.1110	0.1116
Italian Lira*	0.0539	0.0542
Belgian Franc	0.01958	0.01962

* Per 100

Other Currencies

Date: 26/10/91

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7890	1.7950
Lebanese Lira*	0.0773	0.07765
Saudi Riyal	0.1826	0.1835
Kuwaiti Dinar	-	-
Qatari Riyal	0.1862	0.1870
Egyptian Pound	0.2050	0.2150
Omani Riyal	1.7500	1.7650
UAE Dirham	0.1662	0.1670
Greek Drachma*	0.3625	0.3750
Cypriot Pound	1.4500	1.4650

* Per 100

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market*

Index	25/10/91	Close	16/10/91	Close
All-Share	124.01		123.06	
Banking Sector	104.67		104.21	
Insurance Sector	125.21		125.56	
Industry Sector	153.58		151.56	
Services Sector	131.29		131.55	

* December 31, 1990 = 100

Unemployment in France hits record 2.77 million

PARIS (R) — The upward trend in French unemployment resumed in September, after a brief respite in August, and the seasonally adjusted jobless total hit a record 2.77 million last month, the labour ministry said Friday.

The figure was up 26,500 from August and raised the unemployment rate to 9.6 per cent from 9.5 per cent. The rate in September 1990 was 8.9 per cent.

The national statistics office, INSEE, warned in a report Friday that the jobless rate could reach 10 per cent by the end of the year.

The number of people out of work has increased by 240,400 since the start of 1991 as companies shed workers and freeze investment plans in response to a slowdown in the economy.

The jobless total fell slightly in August — the first fall in 12 months — but that was mainly because school-leavers had registered as unemployed earlier than usual this summer.

Labour Minister Martine Aubry is under no illusion that the tide has turned. She has said the total could approach three million around the turn of the year, although measures to create jobs

should begin to have some effect thereafter.

The labour ministry said more than half the increase in September was accounted for by young people signing on at an employment office for the first time.

There was also an increase in the number of redundancies. Some 40,000 people were made redundant in September, 14.8 per cent more than in September 1990, and many more jobs will be lost in coming months as cuts already announced take effect.

Rising unemployment was the main reason behind a one-day general strike Thursday, called by two leading trade unions.

Finance Minister Pierre Bérégovoy recently defended himself against charges that his tight budgetary policy was choking the economy and rejected calls for more public spending.

In a speech to the Economic and Social Council (CES), a body grouping French government, business and union representatives, Mr. Bérégovoy rounded on critics who say he is inflexible.

"We have accepted budget deficits for both 1991 and 1992 that are higher than we would have wished... let's stop confusing the

serious management of economic policy with excessive rigour," he said.

He turned back the charge that the Socialist government Premier Edith Cresson was pursuing a conservative economic policy.

"As if you simply had to accept a bigger budget deficit or a bit more inflation and that would be a progressive policy. That's just not serious," he said.

But demands on the public purse are mounting.

Nurses took to the streets of Paris Tuesday to press for better working conditions and pay. Farmers' demonstrations over falling living standards continued in the provinces.

Dockers have also pledged to strike for one day a week until the government shelves a plan that could cost 4,000 dock jobs.

Mr. Bérégovoy and President François Mitterrand argued that there was no realistic alternative to current policy.

"If we gave in to everybody, we would have to raise taxes. Should we sabotage our economic policy just when it is beginning to bear fruit?" President Mitterrand said in a radio interview.

Arabs urged to merge banks, stock markets

MANAMA, Bahrain (R) — Gulf Arab states should merge their infant stockmarkets, introduce unified company laws and allow foreign participation to develop a genuine capital market, an Arab financial expert has said.

Khalid Al Fayez, chief executive of the Kuwait-based Gulf Investment Corporation, told Reuters the investment climate in the region had improved after the Gulf war but regional capital markets still had a long way to go.

The area cannot support indigenous capital markets — the number of listed firms in any one country without exception could not support a genuine capital market," he said.

"If we could pool the resources of various countries we could allow one genuine market to trade all the paper available — this would be my personal preference," he added.

Mr. Fayez, who heads one of Kuwait's soundest financial institutions, said he believed cash-rich Gulf investors were more willing to put money into domestic projects now than before Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

This was because events had removed some of the uncertainties caused by the Iraqi threat to Kuwait and led to the settlement of unresolved problems between Iran and Iraq remaining from their eight-year conflict, he said.

But Mr. Fayez said the oil-rich countries in the area — Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates — would have to take many steps before they could create sophisticated capital markets. He said:

— Commercial company laws and accounting systems would have to be developed and unified to allow for similar reporting.

— Firms should be encouraged to issue debt instruments to local investors rather than just borrowing from banks.

— Laws should be liberalised to allow foreign shares to be traded and foreign investors and companies to participate.

Government-owned firms should privatise to supply more shares to the market.

"At the moment the problem in the area is that there is no genuine link between the average

saver's money and the investment — it all goes through the mechanism of commercial banks," Mr. Fayez said.

In another interview, an Egyptian financial expert and former prime minister said, Arab financial authorities should encourage domestic banks to merge to help them compete on international markets.

"The world is moving towards bigger units," Abdul Aziz Hegazy, a former banker and prime minister of Egypt, said.

"That is why I do believe the role of central banks in the Gulf area and the Arab World should be to consolidate, to build bigger units — otherwise we will lag behind international banks," he said.

Arab businesses and banks would lose unless they made more efforts to study changes in the international arena and follow new strategies which would enable them to survive, he said.

"We must restructure the banking system so it can stand on its feet, first in its own country and then compete in international markets," Mr. Hegazy said.

Former economy minister intrigues Brazilians by tales of romance

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Brazilians are snapping up a book relating the memoirs of former economy minister Zelia Cardoso de Mello, a tale of seduction and extra-marital hanky-panky around the cabinet table.

"Zelia, a Passion" is about a female minister in her 30s who daringly froze Brazil's bank accounts in an attempt to wipe out inflation and Bernardo Cabral, a married man whose affair with her led to his resignation as justice minister.

The book, written by author Fernando Sabino, gives a few glimpses into behind-the-scenes workings of President Fernando Collor de Mello's cabinet.

For instance, it says Ibrahim

Eris was chosen to be central bank president because of a misplaced telephone call. Mr. Sabino says that Ms. Cardoso told her secretary to place a call to economist Ibrahim Elias to discuss the job, but the call was mistakenly placed to Mr. Eris.

"Well, since it is you, we need to talk," the book quotes Ms. Cardoso as saying.

But it is the married Cabral's seduction of Ms. Cardoso that dominates the book, taking up more than half its 267 pages.

When she met Mr. Cabral, Ms. Cardoso saw him as "far older than I, fat and balding," but she was soon won over by gifts of roses, champagne at a luxury hotel in Sao Paulo and breakfast

at New York's Trump Tower.

At cabinet meetings Mr. Cabral passed notes under the table conveying such messages as: "That miniskirt of yours is delightful." Ms. Cardoso is quoted in the book as saying: "Imagine if instead of landing in my hands (the note) landed in those of (my minister) General Tinoco."

Ms. Cardoso resigned in May as Brazil's first female economy minister after her attempts to control inflation failed. Six months earlier, her well publicised romance with the married justice minister had led to his resignation.

Brazilian critics panned the

book, although the 10,000 copies of the first printing sold out within days of its release.

The newspaper Jornal do Brasil said in a scathing editorial that the book had revealed that "the ex-economy minister was more like Madonna than like Margaret Thatcher."

The affair has not helped the tarnished image of Mr. Collor's government, which has been battered by allegations of corruption and inefficiency and by embarrassing spats between the president and his wife.

"All this nonsense degrades the country, making it the joke of the international community," the Jornal do Brasil said.

Latest earnings reports show no end to U.S. credit crunch

NEW YORK (AP) — The latest bank earnings reports offer little hope the U.S. credit crunch will end soon.

Loan growth at major banks shrank for the three months ended Sept. 30 from a year earlier. Many lenders were preoccupied with building their capital reserves rather than lending money out.

"The loan growth is not there," said Frank Barkocy, senior vice president at Advent, Inc., a brokerage firm. "The big borrowers are not stepping up to the plate even though (interest) rates are coming down. That is a reflection of continued weakness in the economy."

The credit crunch is a term coined to describe a sharp decline in lending to creditworthy borrowers. Citicorp, for example, reported its total loans fell by five per cent in the third quarter from the year earlier. First Interstate Bancorp of Los Angeles and First Chicago Corp. posted more dramatic declines of 15.4 per cent and 14 per cent, respectively.

The balance sheets of many banks show they won't be in the mood for expanded lending in the future.

Citicorp is concentrating on rebuilding its depleted capital cushion against sudden loan losses by the end of the year to meet

tougher international capital standards. Few analysts expect Citicorp to be an aggressive lender as its restructures and cuts costs.

Many banks continue to show high levels of delinquent loans, a situation that generally makes bankers reluctant to assume new risk until the economy assumes a greater vigor, said Mr. Barkocy.

Even strongly capitalised BankAmerica Corp. last quarter reported \$3.05 billion in total non-accrual assets, and loans, basically loans where interest payments are late and repayment of the principal is in doubt.

Midwestern banks, largely spared the fiscal agony of their east coast counterparts, are not seeing strong demand at their loan desks, said Steve Fehr, who follows 40 regional banks for Roney and Co. financial firm in Detroit.

"The loan growth has been meager to flat out here," said Mr. Fehr.

What's causing the credit crunch? No simple answer emerges in interviews with bank executives, regulators and industry analysts.

Thomas Labrecque, Chase Manhattan Corp. chairman and chief executive, told reporters in San Francisco there are many complex reasons for the weak

loan demand.

Both consumers and businesses have more debt following the rapid growth of the 1980s. While most bankers will lend to credit-worthy borrowers, Mr. Labrecque said many well-run businesses want to shed debt and restructure their balance sheet.

"For people who are looking for a simple answer — the bankers did it, the regulators did it, the bankruptcy laws did it — it is considerably more complicated than that," Mr. Labrecque said.

Federal bank examiners are

blamed for excessive strictness in their loan exams, frightening loan officers from authorising new lending.

Meanwhile, top American business leaders say the U.S. economy, while it appears to be emerging from the recession, is facing serious problems that are likely to make 1992 a decidedly subpar year.

The Business Council, made up of chief executives of 100 of the nation's largest corporations are in a downbeat mood about economic prospects.

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Israeli banks announce higher interest rates

TEL AVIV (R) — Most Israeli banks have announced they will again raise their prime interest rate from 20 per cent to a maximum 24 per cent effective Tuesday.

The banks announced late Thursday they had to raise interest rates because of continuing increases in the rate at which they borrow money from the central bank.

Israel's prime interest rates have jumped five times in the past month, from 14.4 per cent at the end of September. The previous rise, to 20 per cent, was announced last week and took effect last Wednesday.

Bank Hapoalim, Israel largest, said its prime rate will be 24 per cent. Discount and Mizrahi banks' rate will rise to 23 per cent and Leumi's to 22.8 per cent.

The central bank said heavy private sector demand for foreign currency, fuelled by expectations of a possible devaluation of the shekel against the dollar, was the reason for a severe cash shortage that pushed up rates.

Private sector demand totalled a record \$111 million Friday, as investors anticipated a possible devaluation of the shekel this weekend.

Friday was the fixing date for 3.3 billion shekels worth of dollar-indexed government-issued securities. Many investors estimate the government did not devalue the shekel before the fixing date to avoid paying holders more cash, and may devalue the shekel once this date has passed.

Finance Minister Yehoshua Modai Thursday told reporters "there are no reasons to devalue the shekel now."

A Bank of Israel official said interest rates will continue to rise as long as the demand for foreign currency does not ebb.

"In this case, higher interest rates is the solution to the private sector's pressure, and not a problem. The central bank will not supply cheap dollars to speculators," a Bank of Israel official told Reuters.

Polly Peck chief sinks deeper in web of charges

LONDON (R) — Asil Nadir, chairman of troubled fruit-to-electronics conglomerate Polly Peck International PLC, has been charged with stealing £130 million (\$222 million).

Mr. Nadir, a Turkish Cypriot, denied the theft charges.

He has already been charged with 18 counts of theft and false accounting involving £25 million (\$42.8 million) of funds belonging to Polly Peck and its subsidiaries in northern Cyprus.

Mr. Nadir must now answer 58 new charges in the case and was remanded on bail until Nov. 7. "These additional charges do not raise any new issues," he said in a statement read by his lawyer.

Mr. Nadir said Britain's Serious Fraud Office, which is investigating the case, appeared "to be confirming themselves to a narrow and technical issue involving inter-company transfers."

Polly Peck shares were the best performers on the London Stock Exchange during the market boom of the 1980s, rising more than 100 times in value.

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Africans head unofficial poll for U.N. chief

UNITED NATIONS (R) — An Egyptian and a Zimbabwean led an unofficial Security Council poll Friday that showed there was strong support for an African candidate to be the new U.N. secretary-general.

Council sources said Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister Boutros Ghali and Zimbabwean Finance Minister Bernard Chidzero each garnered nine votes, while Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland and her foreign minister, Thorvald Stoltenberg, trailed the field of 14 with only two votes apiece.

Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Netherlands Foreign Minister Hans Van Den Broek received five votes each.

Polish Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski, a former law professor, was added to the list of candidates at the closed-door Council session, but was not included in the so-called straw poll this time around, the sources said.

The council's deliberations, for the most part shrouded in secrecy, are to choose a successor to 71-year-old U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, a Peruvian whose second five-year term expires at the end of this year.

Dr. Ghali and Mr. Chidzero are among six candidates sponsored by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), which insists it is time an African held the top U.N. post, hitherto filled by three Europeans, an Asian and a Latin American.

African diplomats were angered when unidentified Security Council members last Monday added five non-African names to a previous list of nine mostly African candidates.

Dr. Ghali and Mr. Chidzero were followed in Friday's unofficial poll by former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, with seven votes and by U.N. Under-Secretary-General James Jonah of Sierra Leone and former physics professor and Culture Minister Nguema Francois Owono of Gabon, with six votes each.

Faring best among the non-African candidates, with five votes each, were: Mr. Mulroney, Mr. Van Den Broek of the Netherlands, and veteran Paris-born diplomat Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, who heads U.N. relief operations in the Gulf.

Two African contenders also obtained five votes apiece — Kenneth "Dadzie" of Ghana, Secretary-General of the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development and Michel Doo Kingue of Cameroon, executive director of the U.N. Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

Nsanze Terence, a former U.N. representative of Burundi, received four votes, while Philippines Foreign Minister Raul Manglapus obtained three.

Mr. Doo Kingue and Terence, although from Africa, are not among the OAU's official nominees.

Council President Chinmaya Gharekhan of India confirmed after the meeting that Poland's Skubiszewski had been added to the roster of candidates as a 15th name.

But he declined to give any details of the straw poll and said only that the process would continue early next week.

In an unofficial straw poll earlier among the five recently added non-Africans, Mr. Van Den Broek was said to have obtained seven votes, Prince Sadruddin six and Mr. Mulroney five, with Ms. Brundtland and Mr. Stoltenberg trailing with two votes each.

This straw poll mirrored one last Monday restricted to the nine original, candidates in which Dr. Ghali and Mr. Chidzero were reported to have topped the ballot with 10 votes each, followed by Mr. Dadzie with seven votes.

A secretary-general is elected by the 166-nation General Assembly, on the recommendation of the 15-nation Security Council.

The council has been hoping to come up with an agreed candidate by the end of this month, though the process could slip into November.

When the council eventually holds a formal secret ballot the five permanent members — the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, China and France — can use their vetoes, which do not apply in straw polls, to block any candidate they oppose.

China is widely thought to favour an African candidate.

Clashes continue in Croatia, Dubrovnik quiet

ZAGREB (AP) — Fighting raged Saturday around the eastern Croatian stronghold of Vukovar and in other parts of the troubled republic. Around Dubrovnik, a tense quiet prevailed with federal troops on the city limits asking Croatian defenders to surrender.

Croatian Defence officials said attacks on the besieged port city on the Adriatic coast only late Friday night, several hours after a ceasefire was announced.

They said the man who was leading the defence of the ancient, scenic town was killed in the last rounds of shelling. His name was not provided. Some 50 people are believed to have been killed in two weeks of shelling of the Dubrovnik area.

The army is now reportedly offering free passage to Croats who surrender, and some reports said some defenders were abandoning their positions.

A ferry carrying humanitarian aid to relieve the misery of a bitter three-week siege of Dubrovnik, the one-time tourist centre, was turned away Saturday, Croatian sources said. On Friday, a boat with food and medicine was allowed to dock.

Elsewhere throughout Croatia, continued fighting posed a reminder of the intractability of the Serb-Croat conflict.

In neighbouring Slovenia, meanwhile, President Milan Kucan, addressing a crowd of 2,000 celebrating the federal army's pullout from his break-away republic, called on "democratic Europe to stop the war" in Croatia.

Simon Smits, the European Community's (EC) spokesman in Zagreb, said "some progress" had been achieved in Friday's talks between warring Yugoslav leaders in the Hague, Netherlands, "in the areas of protecting minority rights and economical cooperation."

He said Lord Carrington, chairman of the EC-sponsored peace talks on Yugoslavia, would travel to the United States Monday to solicit support from the U.N. Security Council. The EC has so far failed to stop fighting in Croatia.

Croatian defence officials said Vukovar, a Croatian stronghold on the Serbian border some 250 kilometres east of Zagreb, came under heavy attack by multi-barrel rocket launchers beginning

early Saturday morning. Infantry units charged the city from the southern suburbs but were repelled, and federal tanks were attacking Vukovar from Negoslavci just to its southwest, they said.

Clashes were also reported in the villages of Tordinci, Nustar and Marinci on the northern front line between Vinkovci and Vukovar.

Three people were killed in clashes late Friday in Karlovac, 50 kilometres southwest of Zagreb, Croatian sources said.

The Sisak region, southeast of Zagreb, also came under mortar attack Saturday, the sources said. The city is one of the last remaining obstacles the army faces on the Croatian capital.

A radically different situation prevailed in Slovenia Saturday, one day after the federal army completed a surprisingly swift pullout that Slovenian leaders said meant they had achieved real independence.

Croatia and Slovenia both proclaimed independence on June 25. But unlike in Croatia, hostilities in ethnically homogeneous Slovenia lasted only 11 days.

At the time of the fighting in June-July, some 20,000 Yugoslav People's Army soldiers were on Slovenian territory. But when a deal was struck on the army pullout a month later, only up to 3,000 were left.

More than 2,000 people gathered Saturday on the dock in the northern Adriatic town of Koper, where the last soldiers left just after midnight.

They waved white, blue and red Slovenian flags and released scores of white doves symbolising peace, as Mr. Kucan inspected police units and territorial defence units.

Mr. Kucan told the crowd that "Slovenia is now free... all conditions are now fulfilled for international recognition."

He thanked the republic's defenders for "bravery and initiative" in their brief war against the Yugoslav army. But he urged Slovenes to remember their neighbours in Croatia, where war is still raging.

Four months ago to the day, Mr. Kucan was standing in central Ljubljana reading out the formal declaration of indepen-

dence. Hours later, federal MiG jets swooped overhead and tanks rolled onto Slovene streets.

Meanwhile defying a ban by Serbian authorities, Muslims in the mountainous Sanjak region of southern Serbia and Montenegro began voting in a referendum for autonomy.

The vote was the latest sign of ethnic splintering in Yugoslavia, in which four of the six republics are seeking independence. It was one of a number of challenges to Serbia by the ethnic groups in the republic's south.

The three-day plebiscite was organised by the Party of Democratic Action despite a ban by the Serbian government.

Asim Ljajic, the Muslim party's secretary, told reporters that police closed down voting booths after about 60 per cent of voters cast their ballots. The referendum will continue in secrecy, Tanjug News Agency quoted him as saying in Novi Pazar, the party's headquarters.

No violence was reported, but tensions in Novi Pazar were high. The local army commander, Col. Cusan Cilibir, said he had ordered mines planted around the town's military barracks.

Pakistani government threatened by corruption charges

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Allegations of corruption threaten to bring down the Islamic government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif just a year after his landslide election victory over Benazir Bhutto.

Before the election, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan had dismissed Mr. Bhutto's own 20-month-old government in response to

corruption charges that included alleged plundering of state-operated banks.

A growing chorus of critics now say the president also should oust the Sharif government. They accuse it of abusing banks by exerting pressure to obtain huge loans with little security, revalue assets and write off debts.

The government has denied

wrongdoing. Mr. Sharif has not commented personally.

Ms. Bhutto seized on the issue, hoping for vindication. She has toured the country, attracting huge crowds at public rallies. Her supporters hand out pamphlets quoting purported documents she says prove the government's financial misdeeds.

"This government of usurpers must step down or be made to step down," Ms. Bhutto said in an interview. "This government has lost the moral authority to govern."

Huge loans obtained from rural financial cooperatives in eastern Punjab province are the main cause of the government's troubles.

KGB planned August coup for months

MOSCOW (AP) — Former KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov plotted the August coup for months, but overestimated the passivity of the Soviet people and the obedience he could expect from his own officers, according to a report.

KGB First Deputy Chairman Anatoly Oleinikov said the investigation of the secret police's role in the failed Aug. 18-19 putsch also could produce a half-dozen more arrests, adding to the 14 people already charged with treason.

Mr. Oleinikov, speaking at a news conference, said the evidence was being turned over to the Soviet prosecutor's office, which is compiling the case against the suspects, who include five KGB officials.

There were no major new revelations, the disclosures did fill in some blanks about the KGB's actions. And in making them, the secret police demonstrated its intention to clean up its blackened image.

Asked why Kryuchkov decided to mount the coup, Mr. Oleinikov said: "My personal opinion is that during the process of democratisation, real power was slipping from their hands, and this is probably what pushed them to this point."

The results of the internal study were released at a time when the budgets and functions of nearly every Kremlin ministry are being questioned. Mr. Oleinikov said republics plan to form their own secret police services and that many of the current KGB's functions would fall under Boris Yeltsin's Russian government.

Mr. Oleinikov said the earliest documents found pertaining to the coup were dated in December, the same month that former Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze resigned warning that a dictatorship was coming.

"There was a very real plan to have a putsch, but the people were supposed to implement it

refused," Mr. Oleinikov said.

"When they were preparing this coup, they apparently did not take into account the moral factor," Mr. Oleinikov said. "They counted on the factor of obedience, ... but of course you realise that professionals who know what's what are working in the KGB, and it's difficult to deceive them."

Documents showed that KGB leaders supported deploying tanks only to intimidate people, and thought actual force would not be needed.

"In that situation, (they) underestimated that the people would put up with such things, but this show of force didn't work," Mr. Oleinikov said.

Mr. Kryuchkov took pains to involve only his top deputies. "Only a small part of the leadership was informed. The rest (of the KGB officers) were supposed to be used in the dark under the pretext of instilling order and discipline," he said.

Bush hopes dashed for big B-2 fleet

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. budget cuts and the end of the cold war have virtually dashed administration hopes to build 75 B-2 Stealth bombers costing over \$850 million each, administration officials said Friday.

But the officials, who asked not to be identified, declined to predict what compromise might be reached by congressional negotiators fighting over whether to go beyond the 15 radar-evading jets already ordered from Northrop.

At a White House news conference Friday, President George Bush refused to say if he was still rigidly supporting his call for 75 B-2s, designed to carry nuclear bombs and missiles to the heart of the Soviet Union.

"I wouldn't say that," Mr. Bush said when pressed on whether there was any softening of his position. "We've got a proposal up there. And let's see where we go with it."

He declined to discuss a New York Times report that General Colin Powell, chairman of the Pentagon Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently told lawmakers he was willing to settle for 30 or 40 of the best-wing aircraft.

"I don't want to take a position on one key player's alleged position and compare it to how somebody else in the administration feels," Mr. Bush said.

But other administration officials said Friday the White House and Defense Department were resigned to a lower figure than 75.

"You can safely say there's widespread realization that 75 are out the window," said one of the officials. "The problem is that public weakening now could be the death of the B-2."

Bush, Democrats reach civil rights compromise

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush and Senate Democrats have reached a compromise on a civil rights bill to fight job discrimination, but disagree over who made the concessions which ended a two-year impasse over the issue.

"We have a piece of civil rights legislation that will guarantee against discrimination in the workplace. It's not a quota bill. It's a fair bill," Mr. Bush said Friday. "I will enthusiastically sign this bill."

The bill would make it easier for workers to win damages against employers for job discrimination based on sex, race, religion or other factors. The agreement came Thursday following negotiations between White House officials and key senators.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said lawmakers agreed to change language that Mr. Bush insisted would force employers to set hiring quotas. "We wanted a non-quota bill and we got a non-quota bill," he said.

But Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, the top Democratic supporter of the bill, said it was Mr. Bush who gave in and accepted a bill that was similar to one the president vetoed last year.

"We gave up nothing of any significance on the quota debate," he told reporters. "Our bill was never a quota bill."

"I think President Bush deserves credit for rejecting, at long last, the advice of those who've been urging him to divide the nation over race," Sen. Kennedy added.

He said the bill would give women a real remedy to fight sex discrimination and sexual harassment.

"We didn't cave (in)," Mr. Bush said. "We worked out, in the spirit of compromise, a negotiated settlement where I can say to the American people this is not a quota bill."

Under the compromise, workers would have to show that hiring practices by a company were discriminatory and were hurting them.

Armenia, Azerbaijan begin peace talks

MOSCOW (AP) — Armenia and Azerbaijan opened formal talks Saturday on settling the dispute over the Nagorno-Karabakh region, where hundreds have died in bloody ethnic fighting over the past three years, the Soviet News Agency (TASS) said.

The talks stem from a deal mediated by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev in September to bring the two sides together and resolve the conflict over who controls the Armenian enclave that lies within Azerbaijan.

TASS said the opening round of "closed-door" talks were being held in the Armenian village of Kayan.

"We understand one or two meetings will not solve all our problems, which have piled up over the past years," TASS quoted Armenia's first deputy parliamentary leader Babken Ararktsyan as saying. "But we believe they should be solved through negotiations rather than confrontation."

He said, "We will try to find mutually acceptable solutions."

TASS said his Azerbaijani counterpart, Ziad Samed-Zade, shared the same view and that Saturday's meeting showed both sides are ready to find a way to resolve the conflict.

The talks were attended by observers from the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan.

The two sides agreed to meet again on Nov. 15 in the city of Zangelan in Azerbaijan, TASS said.

The conflict between mostly Christian Armenia and mostly Muslim Azerbaijan, dates back centuries, but flared anew in 1988 when Armenians, who constitute a majority in Nagorno-Karabakh, said they wanted to unite with Armenia.

More than 800 people have been killed in the ethnic unrest since 1988.

Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Nazarbayev were able to bring the two sides together on Sept. 24, but since then an early ceasefire agreement fell apart and dozens of people have been killed in ethnic fighting.

In a separate development Mr. Yeltsin, struggling to regain control of his government, cut a deal Friday with lawmakers over the election of local officials and named his choice for prime minister.

At the same time, officials issued dire warnings about food shortages next year.

Mr. Yeltsin is labouring to put his government back on track after weeks of infighting and resignations that broke the political momentum he had gained by leading opposition to the Aug. 18-21 coup.

The most contentious issue centred on his selection of hundreds of local officials who administer governments across the huge Russian Federation. Mr. Yeltsin selected the officials last year, to circumvent Communist Party control, but Russian legislators voted earlier this month to elect new officials by Dec. 6.

Mr. Yeltsin said elections would paralyse his government and demanded the ballot be put off until next year. When lawmakers rejected his appeal, he vetoed their election law and alienated the legislature.

On Friday lawmakers accepted Mr. Yeltsin's compromise to hold the election in stages this December, avoiding a sudden turnover of his supporters while allowing new officials to take over by year's end, Soviet media said.

Doctors remove huge cyst from woman

PALO ALTO, California (R) — A 303-pound (137-kg) ovarian cyst was surgically removed from a woman who had postponed the operation for years out of fear of the risks, doctors at the Stanford University Hospital said. The 34-year-old woman, whose identity was not disclosed, was reported "doing fine" after the six-hour operation, said Dr. Katherine O'Hanlan, the gynecologic cancer surgeon who led the operating team at the hospital in northern California. The prognosis for recovery was excellent, Dr. O'Hanlan said. The patient weighed 230 pounds (95 kg) after the 363-pound (137-kg) growth was removed, the hospital said.

Mr. O'Hanlan said the abdominal mass was so large that none of the surgeons could lift it and, after it was removed, they tolled it onto a stretcher so that it could be cut up for microscopic examination. The woman had had the cyst for 10 years and had been bedridden for two years, fearing surgery after hearing it was risky, doctors said.

Tito's 64 suits will go to his family

BELGRADE (AP) — Members of the family of the late Yugoslav Communist leader Josip Tito have won an 11-year battle to inherit his personal belongings, a daily has reported. The Belgrade evening newspaper said a municipal court decided to award Tito's 64 suits and 805 other personal items to his widow Jovanka and his two sons, Zarko and Aleksandar-Misa. It said the decision was handed down earlier this month, but gave no exact date. The inheritance litigation began in 1982, after Jovanka was evicted from Tito's former residence and authorities impounded his belongings, as well as some items that belonged to her. Jupp Broz Tito founded post-World War II Yugoslavia after leading partisans in a successful fight against the Nazis. The Communist state he created suppressed the explosive nationalist passions that recently erupted in a civil war that has cost well over 1,000 lives. But Tito also left Yugoslavia heavily indebted and one of the poorest countries in Europe. The list of his personal belongings includes 16 different marshals' uniforms, 142 shirts, mostly white, 173 ties and 168 pairs of socks. With his 80 pairs of shoes, Tito rivaled his long-time Romanian Communist ally Nicolae Ceausescu for diversity of footwear. "Tito, a Croat, now seems the most hated man in Yugoslav history, blamed by all sides of the current conflict for the country's woes."

Edinburgh Festival goes into deficit

EDINBURGH (R) — A slump in audiences at the Edinburgh International Festival this year has plunged one of the world's premier cultural events into deficit. Only 63 per cent of tickets for the three-week August festival of art, music and drama were sold, compared to 76 per cent last year. The deficit of £220,000 (£375,000) followed a surplus of £130,000 (£220,000) in 1990. General Manager Nicholas Dodds said a deficit had been expected as fewer tourists visited Britain this year because of recession and fear of terrorism after the Gulf war. The 1992 festival will open on Aug. 16 with Arnold Schoenberg's opera Moses and Aaron.

Film star will not be charged with shoplifting

SANFORD (AP) — Former film star Hedy Lamarr, who was caught leaving a drugstore this summer with unpaid items in her purse, won't be charged with shoplifting. "We reached an agreement we felt was in the public's best interest and her own best interest," assistant state attorney Charles Tabacott said. "It just boils down to a case in which prosecution is really not justified." Miss Lamarr, 76, shops with a companion because she cannot see well enough to read labels or prices tags or handle money, said her lawyer, Joerg Jaeger. Miss Lamarr thought she had paid for the \$21.48 worth of laxative tablets and eyedrops found in her purse in August, Mr. Jaeger said. He met with prosecutors Wednesday and signed an agreement promising she would not break any laws for a year. If she does, said Mr. Tabacott, theft charges could be filed. Miss Lamarr, who lives in the Orlando suburb of Altamonte Springs, did not comment on the case.

Candidates wrap up campaign; Miyazawa solid favourite to succeed Kaifu

TOKYO (Agencies) — The top-sided three-man race to replace Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu took to the streets of Japan's capital Saturday for one last pitch on the final day of campaigning.

By nearly all accounts, Kiichi Miyazawa, one of the nation's most experienced politicians, was expected to win in a landslide when the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) — chooses its next president Sunday.

The party's undisputed control of the lower house of parliament means that the winner of that vote will become the next prime minister.

"It's just another day," the slight, round-faced Miyazawa told a crowd of reporters gathered at his home early Saturday morning.

Another candidate, former Foreign Minister Hiroshi Mitsu-

zawa's favour, Mr. Mitsu-

zawa and the third declared candidate — Michio Watanabe, a former finance minister — have given him only a weak challenge and are instead battling each other for second place.

Mr. Mitsuizuka has been hobbled by defections from within his own faction, which has over the past week fallen behind Mr. Miyazawa's to rank third.

Mr. Watanabe, who heads the fourth-largest faction, acknowledges he has little hope of winning without the support of at least one other top faction. Mr. Kaifu's faction has said it will support Mr. Miyazawa.

The two candidates hope finishing second will increase their chances of garnering powerful cabinet posts for their own cliques.

"We'll see what happens Sunday," said Mr. Watanabe, known for his outspokenness, a rare attribute among consensus-

minded Japanese politicians. But in what appeared to be a concession of defeat, Mr. Watanabe added, "this isn't my last candidacy."

The Liberal Democratic Party is divided into five factions, whose main function is to promote their members to cabinet posts. Faction heads frequently rotate as party president.

In Sunday's election, 101 votes have been allotted to 1.75 million rank-and-file party members and one vote each to the 395 Liberal Democrats in parliament.

The allotment of votes underlines the importance of factional support, since the largest faction, with 105 parliament members, has more influence than the combined rank-and-file votes.

The choice of Mr. Miyazawa through factional power-brokering has raised shrill criticism from the media. One major newspaper asked why Japan bothered holding an election when the winner already had

been picked behind closed doors. And poll released Friday by the Yomiuri Shimbun, Japan's largest newspaper, indicated that nearly half of 3,000 voters surveyed last weekend "don't expect much" of Mr. Miyazawa.

Possibly because of the outcry, all candidates have recently been stressing their views on policy and the touchy issue of political reform, which was the centrepiece of Mr. Kaifu's administration.

Mr. Miyazawa, who like many other conservative party leaders was tainted by an influence-peddling scandal that prompted him to resign as finance minister two years ago, has vowed to push for reforms.

He has also said Japan should not bow down to every demand made upon it by the United States, but at the same time has emphasised he believed relations between the two allies are sound and strong.

Whoever wins the race will